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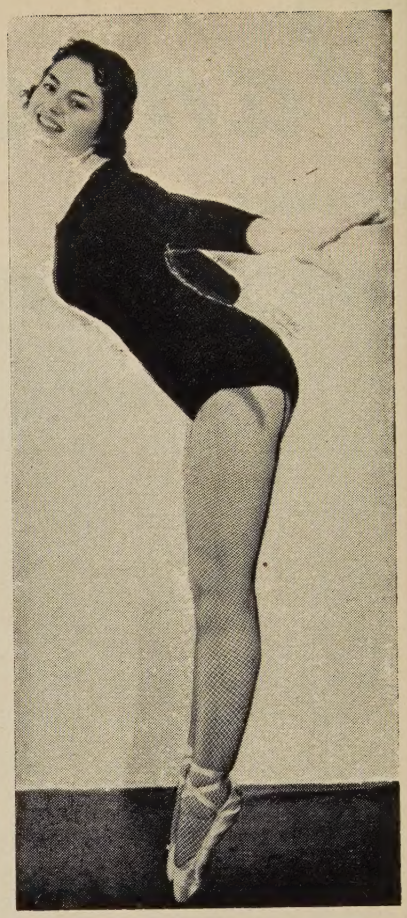

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Personality of the Month

ZIZI JEANMAIRE

EVEN the most clairvoyant of us could hardly have foretold just where the chestnut-haired little girl whom London first saw in Lifar's *Aubade*, when Le Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo appeared at the Cambridge Theatre in 1946, would eventually land up. Obviously Jeanmaire's début in this ballet (she had previously received training from the Paris Opéra, Volinine and Kniaseff) was a turning point in her career, but there were to be two others that have paid a vital part in making Renée (now Zizi) Jeanmaire one of the world's great stars. Before then, however, her career had been fairly run-of-the-mill as she appeared in classics with the re-formed Original Ballet Russe, though in one undistinguished work, *Piccoli*, she started to show something of her Parisian gamine quality that has been developed over the years. After that she joined Roland Petit's newly-formed Ballets de Paris and her performances were no more than that of the average French dancer until suddenly, at the Princes Theatre in London, came *Carmen*. Overnight Zizi became a sensation, and all over the world people flocked in to see her and Roland Petit (later to become her husband) as Don José. It was the part of a lifetime and Zizi, physically and technically so right for it, gave the cigarette factory slut with such fire and conviction that she was irristible and never likely to be equalled. The next turning point came with a ballet that followed shortly after — in *La Croqueuse de Diamants*, Zizi had to sing. Charming though it was, it did not then appear that her Diamond Cruncher's song would lead to yet another career — but it did. Musicals and films in the States followed (*The Girl in Pink Tights, Hans Christian Andersen, Anything Goes*), and it looked as though Zizi was not only lost to ballet but to Europe also. However she eventually returned to appear in French musicals of Petit's devising and also made several returns to Ballets de Paris on its occasional re-formations, as well as in French films. Though nothing she did ever quite equalled her first great successes, she remained one of Paris's great stars, adored by the Parisian public. Another turning point occurred a few years ago when she appeared at the Alhambra Music Hall and took up the whole hour-long second half of a variety bill. Starting off alone on a huge stage she enthralled the audience with her songs, later she did some dancing with a group of boys, and there was no question but that a new star of the music hall was born. It is a mixture of this and ballet that Zizi now shows to London.

NOVEMBER 1960 11th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 11 No. 11

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor: E. C. Mason.
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Losing the peace

THE British, we are told, win wars but inevitably lose the peace. The past few years have made this fault pathetically apparent. The main reason is that we lack enterprise. Never has this lack of enterprise, as far as ballet and London are concerned, been more graphically shown than by what is happening — or rather what is *not* happening — in the metropolis at the present moment. For some years now all those people who say that they want to do things have come blubbering to us that they can never do the things they want because the Royal Ballet is hogging all the ballet space. Well, the Royal Ballet (the main section of it) is tidily out of the way until the Spring, and what is more, everybody has had due warning, for at least six months in advance, that they would be so absent from the sound of Bow Bells. Also, everybody has had equal warning that not only would the Royal Ballet be away but that the autumn of 1960 would be the blankest period for dancing that London has known since the war. So what do all these moaning eager-beavers do about it, all these people with such wonderful ideas and so much big talk? The answer is, sweet fanny adams.

By this I don't mean those impresarios who import foreign companies, because the Daubeneys and the Hepners are doing their bit, as is the Anglo-Asian Music Circle, who are bringing us Indrani. Nor do I mean the Sunday Ballet Club, which is manfully carrying on in spite of the fact that the main body of their usual dancing personnel, the Royal Ballet, is far, far away. No, all these people earn our praise, but the people I am addressing are those who keep on boasting that right here there are dancers and ballets at their command who are so good that they could prove any time that they were better than the established companies, and there are a great number of you who make such declarations.

Well, here was your chance and, by jove, you've missed it. At no time would you have received such attention from the public, critics, magazines and newspapers. You could have had it all your own way just as Festival Ballet did at the time when they started, because they became an integrated company during a similar lull. All this you could have done and you haven't, and by your sluggardliness you are probably never going to get one ounce of sympathy from us again — ever. The only good thing is that to your moans none of us will have to listen again — the deaf ear is turned permanently. Do you think that in New York they would let such an opportunity slip by? Of course not, never in a thousand United Nations' conferences.

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Massine goes North

by CLIVE BARNES

MASSINE REHEARSES : Leonide Massine rehearsing the corps de ballet *in his revival of* Choreartium, *which was originally created for Colonel de Basil's company at the Alhambra Theatre, London, in 1933.*

THE whole idea of an International Festival of Music and Drama should be to present something, to say the least, special. A few years ago it always seemed as though the Edinburgh Festival was able to give its visitors events and performances that could not be sampled anywhere else in the British Isles. Companies and artists gathered in Edinburgh, and the people who thronged to see them could be sure of getting something new and different. Nowadays it seems as though everything and everyone is either on its way to London or on its way from London, and the old exclusiveness that once gave the Festival its cachet is fast disappearing.

The only dance event unique to the Scottish capital was Leonide Massine's Ballets Européens de Nervi, and although on many counts the company proved a disappointment, undoubtedly the Festival authorities showed a welcome enterprise in engaging a new major company about which there had naturally been so much speculation.

For many years it has been known that Massine has wanted to have control of a ballet company completely his own. This year the authorities of the Nervi Ballet Festival gave him his wish, and after holding auditions all over Europe, Massine formed this present large company. Before appearing this summer at the Nervi Festival it had rehearsed for a considerable time, and as well as revivals, Massine produced one new one-act ballet, *Le Bal des Voleurs,* and two full-length ballets, *The Barber of Seville,* a note by note visualisation of the Rossini opera with an off-stage cast of singers, and *La Commedia Umana,* based on stories taken from Boccaccio's *Decameron.*

Most of the fifty-five dancers which Massine has gathered together are young, and quite a number of them comparatively inexperienced. The majority of the leading soloists have come from the Milorad Miskovitch company, which was engaged as a solo group. However, the troupe's only indisputable star in Edinburgh was Milorad Miskovitch himself, although in Carla Fracci, Yvonne Meyer and Duska Sifnios it had three of Europe's most promising young dancers, while it was a pleasure to welcome back the veteran Leon Woizikowsky and the company was strengthened by the presence of Wassili Sulich, Harry Haythorne, Ivan Dragadze, and a bright newcomer, Paolo Bortoluzzi. However, I think it would be fair to stress right from the beginning that this is a company with dancers for the most part at present more of international potentiality than international calibre.

FOURTH MOVEMENT : Paolo Bortoluzzi and Carla Fracci in the last movement of Massine's Choreartium *to Brahms' Fourth Symphony. The designs for this movement remain those by Eugene Lourie, the original designer.*

Massine's intentions in forming the company were, as he made clear at a press conference, partly to preserve as much as possible of the old Diaghilev repertory, and also to produce new ballets, primarily by Massine himself. In view of these intentions the repertory selected for Edinburgh, and indeed to a lesser extent the repertory produced at Nervi, seemed curious. There was only one Diaghilev ballet, Fokine's *Schéhérazade,* and Massine's choice of his own works proved, at least to my mind, unfortunate.

What made the prospect of this company particularly intriguing was the possibility it held out of answering what might be regarded as ballet's most surprising question — namely, whatever became of Leonide Massine? Unquestionably the slump in Massine's reputation from its pre-war pinnacle has been among the truly remarkable aspects of post-war ballet. Once, and only a few years ago at that, regarded as the world's leading choreographer, Massine has now slid so far down the slippery pole of fashion that to the young generation of ballet-goers he is rapidly becoming little more than a name. A few of his ballets are still regularly performed in the repertories of the world, yet I cannot help feeling that his fame is slowly diminishing into that of an historically important, but nevertheless comparatively minor figure. Such an assessment I feel does Massine a grave injustice. Although he occasionally was overestimated in his heyday, fashionable ballet opinion today tends to neglect him.

I had hoped that this new company would have done much to have restored Massine to his rightful position among the top choreographers of the world, but for a variety of reasons I cannot honestly believe that this has been the case. Indeed, if anything, Massine's reputation appears to be more crumpled now than before. But what

THIRD MOVEMENT: Carla Fracci, held aloft, in the third movement of Choreartium. *This movement has new designs by André Beaurepaire.*

went so wrong could, I feel, have easily have gone right, and if the lessons of Nervi and Edinburgh were to be taken to heart, a phoenix might still arise from these ashes.

FIRST PROGRAMME

First given in Britain at the Empire Theatre, Edinburgh, on September 5, 1960.

Massine's first programme was a three-in-hand repertory bill, consisting of revivals of *Schéhérazade, Choreartium* and *Le Beau Danube.*

Schéhérazade

Choreography by Michel Fokine; scenario by Alexandre Benois; Music by Rimsky-Korsakov; décor and costumes by Léon Bakst.

Zobeide ..... TATIANA MASSINE Jnr.
Shah ..... WASSILI SULICH
His Brother ..... NICOLAS PETROV
Eunuch ..... LEON WOIZIKOWSKY
Slave ..... ADOLFO ANDRADE
Odalisques ... MARGA NATIVO, JENNY TREVELYAN, ANNA VAUGHAN
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I'M all in favour of the past and I love old ballets. Strictly speaking I ought to be entranced by a revival of Fokine's *Schéhérazade,* and loosely speaking I still think I could be. It is not the easiest of ballets to resuscitate because its harem eroticism means terribly little to our own generation. Dark mysterious ladies stretched out on tiger-skin rugs, bribing eunuchs and taking negro lovers, have become not so much a cliché as a joke. Even to accept *Schéhérazade* with any degree of seriousness whatsoever, the literary imagination has to take a leap back into the world of *The Yellow Book,* Oscar Wilde and even André Gide. Fifty years ago voluptuousness and orientalism had an artistic validity and interest, that this ballet admirably exploited.

Now not only do we have to suspend our disbelief in *Schéhérazade,* we also have to suppress our laughter, and this could only be done were the ballet to be produced with utter conviction. It is a period piece like *Giselle,* but whereas few dancers are so insensitive that they perform *Giselle* as if it were a modern ballet, a work like *Schéhérazade* is almost invariably given as if it were a rather pointless contemporary burlesque.

Choreographically *Schéhérazade* remains a most remarkable piece of work. Many of the individual dances, those for the Odalisques, for example, are exquisitely constructed. Yet where perhaps Fokine most excelled was in his sweeping mass effects, seen here in the splendid complications of some of the *ensemble* dances. Strangely enough, although this new revival made, on me at least, precious little impact, it showed every sign of unusually careful production. Not only was the choreography given with apparently loving detail, but the Bakst décor and costumes had been revived in all their literally fabulous splendour.

Decoratively, Britain has not seen such a *Schéhérazade* as this in many a long year. For the first time in my experience I was conscious of the sheer opulent glory of Bakst's designs. The peacock-hued costumes with all their fantastic exuberance of larger-than-life orientalism, are perfectly placed against a setting that is almost hazy with atmosphere. The architectural values of this classic ballet set must remain almost unequalled, and I cannot think of another setting that shows such a brilliantly convincing use of perspective.

When the curtain went up on this *Arabian Nights'* fantasy world peopled with its birds of paradise, my heart rose, only to fall and fall again as the ballet unfolded, as the cast proved itself unequal to its task. Massine's daughter, Tatiana, is a striking looking girl, with something of that terrible Russian beauty that looks as though it eats three men every morning before breakfast! But although technically the rôle of Zobeide is, to say the very most, undemanding, it taxes a dancer's interpretative powers to the utmost, and the young Massine lacked the authority that is needed to make anything out of it.

Adolfo Andrade, her Golden Slave, turned out to be more silver-gilt than gold, and failed even to glitter. Like Tatiana Massine, Andrade looked the part, but there his performance virtually began and ended. His dancing was unemphatic instead of lithe and sinuous, and his acting was not so much bad as unnoticeable.

Curiously, even the great Woizikowsky — making his first appearance on a British stage for twenty-one years — seemed weighed down by the teen-age revels he found around him, and was able to make very little positive out of the Chief Eunuch. However, just like everyone else, he looked magnificent — if only the ballet had been a tableau of dummies, all would have been well. As it was, the only two performances to show the monumentally grand passion which the ballet requires were those of Wassili Sulich as the Shah and, to only a slightly lesser extent, Nicolas Petrov as his Brother. As to the ballet as a whole, perhaps only the Soviet companies could make it live today.

Choreartium

Choreography by Leonide Massine; Music by Brahms; Décor for the 1st, 2nd and 4th movements by Eugene Lourie and for the 3rd movement by André Beaurepaire; Costumes by Constantine Terechkovich. The production revived by Tatiana Massine (second movement) and Tatiana Leskova (1st, 3rd and 4th movements)

First Movement:
VJERA MARKOVIC
ANNA RAZZI
DUSKA SIFNIOS
ADOLFO ANDRADE

Second Movement:
TATIANA MASSINE, Jr.

Third Movement:
CARLA FRACCI
YVONNE MEYER
PAOLO BORTOLUZZI
IVAN DRAGADZE

Fourth Movement:
CARLA FRACCI
NICOLE NOGARET
ANNA RAZZI
DUSKA SIFNIOS
ADOLFO ANDRADE
PAOLO BORTOLUZZI
IVAN DRAGADZE
WASSILI SULICH

UNQUESTIONABLY one of the principal attractions of the Massine season was the revival of Massine's own ballet, *Choreartium*. Although this was among the most celebrated ballets of the thirties it had not been seen in Britain since the war.

Choreartium was the second of Massine's symphonic ballets. First produced in London in 1933, right at the end of De Basil's first Covent Garden season, this ballet set to Brahms' Fourth Symphony, in its time sparked off a lively musical controversy. The question of whether Massine *should* have used a Brahms Symphony for the purposes of ballet may now seem academic. It was, as I think most people would now be inclined to agree, a wildly improbable choice of music that could only be justified by a very considerable success. Such a success was not, I feel, forthcoming.

Before commenting on the ballet itself it is only fair to say something generally on the performance which, either through under-rehearsal or even perhaps over-rehearsal, was astonishingly ragged in Edinburgh. This, added to the natural disadvantages attendant on any ballet produced at Edinburgh's Empire Theatre, makes detailed criticism of *Choreartium* somewhat difficult. Better performed and adequately staged it would possibly still have its moments of impressiveness. For all this, and after having made every possible allowance for the deficiencies of the revival, the ballet nowadays looks full of faults and sadly dated.

Being wise after the event is a critical privilege perhaps too easily abused, yet seeing *Choreartium* now, twenty-seven years after its creation, it seems to have about it much of the spirit of the unhappy and sterile thirties. There is a pretentiousness to its grandiose architectural groupings, a portentous lack of meaning to its empty-hearted gestures and a general falsity about its heroics. In many places the poor old ballet looked almost like a parody of Frank Staff's symphonic episode in *Czernyana*, and everywhere there was evidence of Massine's exceedingly naïve musicality.

Arnold Haskell, writing at the time, said of *Choreartium*: "Such a feat on this scale has never before been attempted in choreography. It is the birth and the triumph of pure dancing, and shows that in the hands of a master its possibilities are inexhaustible." He also regarded it as Massine's "masterpiece" up to that time, as did many other people. It is difficult to see precisely why so many ballet-goers would, I cannot help thinking, nowadays dissent from this opinion. Personally I suspect that for the present generation the ideal of Nietzschian supermen that seems to radiate from this ballet is unsympathetic. Equally the ballet now looks old-fashioned choreographically. The works of Ashton and Balanchine have taught the post-war generation to look for something deeper in musico-choreographic structure than the literal parallelism painstakingly sought by Massine. A year after Massine produced *Choreartium*, Balanchine produced *Serenade*, a work as fresh today as when it was first created. There seems little to add.

The scenery by Eugene Lourie and the costumes by Constantine Terechkovich looked colourlessly banal, and the new scenery provided for the third movement by André Beaurepaire proved a fair match. It is, however, only fair to bear in mind that when *Choreartium* was first created, abstract stage décors were strikingly original, and like the ballet itself these designs deserve some credit for breaking new ground.

The ballet was badly danced in Edinburgh, although there were one or two performances of considerable interest. Best of all was the radiant and fresh dancing of

HUMAN COMEDY DESIGNER: Above is Alfred Manessier, the famous painter, who designed Massine's La Commedia Umana. *Left is his design for the costume of Griselda in the last scene. Right is his design for the Prince.*

Photos: Lido.

SOME HUMAN COMEDY PRINCIPALS: Left, Nicole Nogaret, as the Princess, and Milorad Miskovitch, as the Prince, in the episode "The Triumph of Virtue", which is the last of the stories in La Commedia Umana. *Photo: Lido. Right, Duska Sifnios, as Elena, who has to sing naked from a tall tower, in "The Triumph of Ingenuity".*

Carla Fracci and Paolo Bortoluzzi in the third movement, and Yvonne Meyer and Duska Sifnios also provided some good moments. Tatiana Massine Jr. seemed quite inadequate for the elegiac second movement, in the rôle originally danced by Nina Verchinina.

Le Beau Danube

Libretto and Choreography by Leonide Massine; Music by Johann Strauss; Scenery and costumes inspired by Constantine Guys.

Park-Keeper ..... LEONIDE MASSINE Jr.
First Hand ....JACOTTE BORDIER
Young Girl ..... CARLA FRACCI
Dandy ..... IVAN DRAGADZE
Hussar ..... MILORAD MISKOVITCH
Street Dancer ..... YVONNE MEYER
Strong Man ..... ENRICO SPORTIELLO
Manager ..... HARRY HAYTHORNE

IN every respect this was the company's most successful offering in Edinburgh, even though it was in places surprisingly miscast. As a production nearly all the minor rôles were remarkably well danced, and no performances of the ballet since the war have so well caught the atmosphere and period flavour of 19th-century Vienna.

Le Beau Danube is one of Massine's better ballets, although not perhaps a masterpiece in the class of *The Good-Humoured Ladies* or *The Three-Cornered Hat*. It is a sturdy ballet, well worth its place in any repertory (it has always seemed a pity to me that the Royal Ballet has never produced it), yet its too close reliance upon Massine's own rôle of the Hussar might be regarded as a serious flaw. It is, however, a difficult ballet to resist, and one which I never expect to grow tired of.

When over ten years ago a very young Milorad Miskovitch first danced the Hussar in the truncated version Massine produced for Petit's company, he looked ridiculously like a St. Cyr cadet, yet managed to give the impression that one day he might have been very good in the part. It seems that this was not to be, for in Edinburgh he looked sorely miscast. The difficulty is that Miskovitch's personality is altogether too open-hearted and agreeable. He has glamour in plenty but it is the glamour of a poet, not a hussar. Yvonne Meyer proved too cute and young for the Street Dancer, although her dancing showed plenty of style and vitality. Ivan Dragadze made little of the King of the Dandies, but Paolo Bortoluzzi (in the ballet's second cast) had all the lithe elegance, if not quite the spiv snap the part calls for. Carla Fracci, a dancer who charms me more every time I see her, was delicately touching as the Young Girl, while Anna Razzi, an attractive and lyrical dancer, made an acceptable second cast.

In the other rôles Enrico Sportiello and that very under-rated British dancer, Harry Haythorne, were both excellent as the Strong Man and the Manager respectively, but Jacotte Bordier lacked true gaiety as the First Hand, while Leonide Massine Jr. got the ballet off to a poor start as the Park-Keeper, a rôle in which Derek Westlake in the second cast was far better.

The décor and costumes had been restored with much the same care as had been lavished on *Schéhérazade*, even though the wings were set rather too far in. A strange omission in the production was the hussar's shako, which looked as though it had been lost between Nervi and Edinburgh, for Miskovitch made his entrance as if he were carrying it.

SECOND PROGRAMME

La Commedia Umana

First given at the Empire Theatre, Edinburgh, on September 8, 1960. A choreographic interpretation of the DECAMERON by G. Boccaccio; Literary Supervision by Vittore Branca; Adaptation and Choreography by Leonide Massine; Music of the 14th Century elaborated by Claude Arrieu; Scenery and Costumes by Alfred Manessier.

SYNOPSIS

"This choreographic interpretation of the DECAMERON takes as its basis the idea that the lives of men are governed by three forces, Fortune, Love and Ingenuity; but the power of Virtue is greater than these three even when put together."

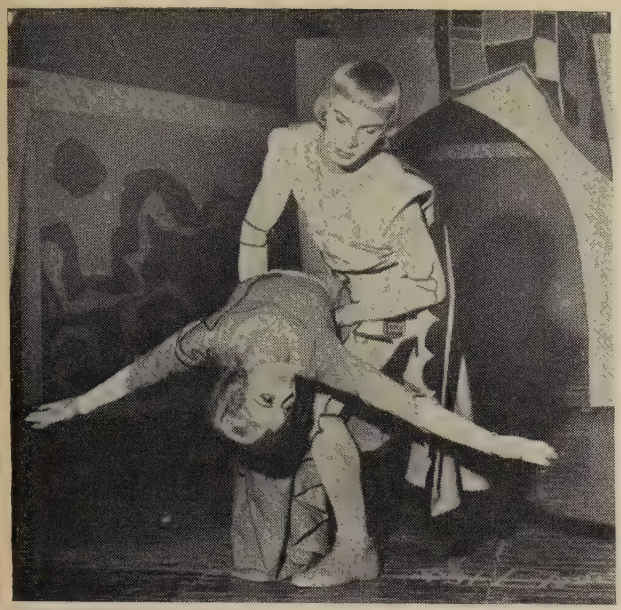
Act I. The triumph of Fortune

PROLOGUE: "It is the 14th century and in Florence plague and pestilence (Claude Darnet) rage. Death (Nicolas Petrov) walks unchecked in the city and those who can, flee to the country. A group of these refugees meet in a villa, where to pass the time they tell stories.... The first of these concerns:

ANDREUCCIO: "A young man (Enrico Sportiello) who goes to Naples to buy horses meets Fiordaliso (Yvonne Meyer), who parts him from his money and then gets him out of her house by an unusual underground exit. His loud cries are heard sympathetically by a band of grave-robbers, who quickly leave him when the watchmen appear. However he has not been deserted by Fortune and presently he is released from his tomb by a second group of robbers, who imagine him to be a ghost. All ends happily as he is reunited to his friends.

"Another story is told in which Fortune guides the events...

GINEVRA'S husband, Barnabo (Alfredo Kollner), makes a wager that his wife (Duska Sifnios) is faithful to him. Ambrogiolo (Wassili Sulich) accepts the wager and



THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE: Left, Carla Fracci, as Solimonda, and Adolfo Andrade as Guardistagno, the two lovers who are discovered by her husband. Right, the tournament in this episode (called Amore e Morte) *when the discovery takes place.*
Photos: Lido.

soon furnishes Barnabo with proof of her infidelity. He orders his servants to kill her, but instead they help her to escape to Alexandria, where in the guise of a man she becomes a great power in the land.

Act II. The triumph of Love

"Now the Narrators start to tell stories in which the lives of the characters are governed by Love (sometimes accompanied by Death) . . .

AMORE E MORTE. "Solimonda (Carla Fracci) and Guardistagno (Adolfo Andrade) are lovers. During a tournament between the rival houses of Guardistagno and Rossiglione, the husband of Solimonda (Alfredo Kollner) discovers their love, and takes his revenge by serving the heart of his rival, Guardistagno, at a banquet.

NASTAGIO (Milorad Miskovitch) "is a frustrated lover, who is haunted by a vision of a woman in torment (Yvonne Meyer), who is beset by devils, torn by hounds and pursued by a fierce knight (Ivan Dragadze), from whom he is powerless to protect her. He is finally united to his beloved Traversari (Nicole Nogaret) after she too has shared the vision.

Act III. The triumph of Ingenuity

"These stories deal with those whose lives are affected by people quicker-witted than themselves . . .

"PERONELLA (Vjera Markovic) tells her husband (Enrico Sportiello) that the man who has been found alone in the house with her (Ivan Dragadze) has come to buy a barrel, which must be cleaned for him to take away.

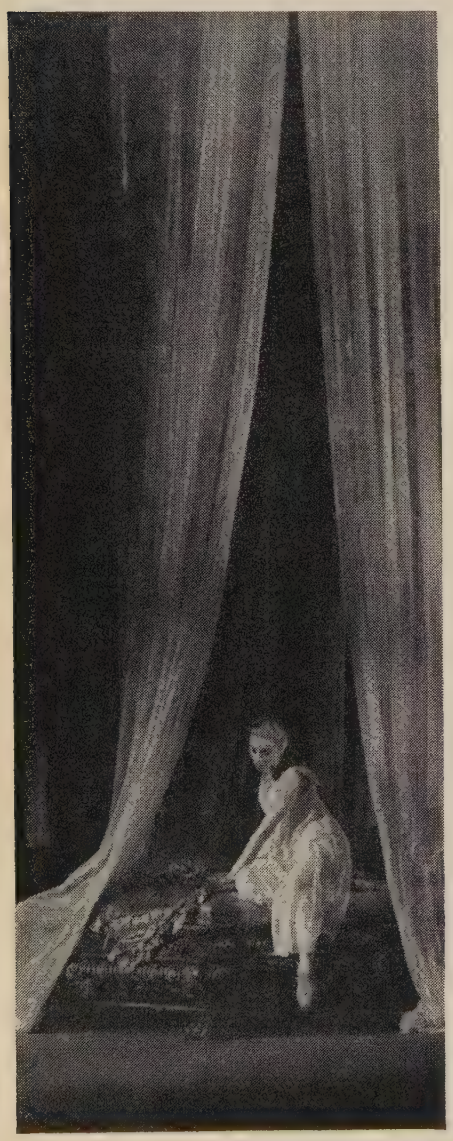
"ELENA (Duska Sifnios) is persuaded by a neglected lover (Paolo Bortoluzzi) that when she wishes to return to him, she must first sing naked from a tall tower (from which he removes the means of egress and where she is attacked by mosquitoes).

"CALANDRINO (Leon Woizikowsky) believes, despite his wife's (Tania Ouspenska) admonitions to the contrary, that he is invisible. He is relieved of this delusion only to imagine that he is pregnant, for which state his friends arrange a "cure", knowing that he will give them a grand repast in gratitude.

Continued on page 23

THE TRIUMPH OF VIRTUE: Griselda, Tatiana Massine, is re-united to the Prince, Milorad Miskovitch, in the final episode from Commedia Umana.

OTHELLO: *Two scenes (above and below, left) from Jirí Nemecek's version of Shakespeare's play for the Prague National Theatre Ballet with Olga Skálová as Desdemona and Viktor Malcev as Othello.* *Photo: Svoboda.*



Czechoslovakia moves forward

by BERNARD ORNA

Last month, Bernard Orna edited an article by Jan Rey who is Czechoslovakia's leading critic and "librettist". In that article Rey outlined the history of Czechoslovak ballet and assessed its present standard in the world. This month, Bernard Orna, a British writer, tells of what he has seen recently in Prague and other Czechoslovak principal centres as well as discussing future prospects with the Prague National Theatre's ballet director and and choreographer—Jiri Nemecek.

THE past three or four years in Czechoslovakia have seen the development of a move to create original ballets, based on themes from the national, or from a foreign, treasury of stories and literature.

But before this subject is enlarged upon, it should be mentioned that there have been also the stagings in Czechoslovakia of further modern works from abroad and the introduction, or revival, of older ballets. Under the first heading one notes Chulaki's *Youth* (Soviet), Raichev's *Hajduk Ballad* (Bulgarian), Hristic's *An Okhrid Legend* (Yugoslav) and not least Benjamin Britten's *Prince of the Pagodas.* Under the second come ballets which, at the same time, reflect a renewed interest in shorter works — *Prometheus,* with music by Beethoven, and *Carnaval,* with that of Schumann, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Schéhérazade,* Stravinsky's *Petrushka,* Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and so on.

Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty* and *Casse-Noisette* continued the while to be performed again and again at different theatres. However, as Jan Rey has informed me, these were not traditional stagings "preserving the choreography of Petipa and Ivanov" because "neither knowledge nor experience of the tradition are available".

"It must be said," remarks Rey, "that Tchaikovsky usually rises above the choreography. This has been the case, for instance, with a presentation of *Casse-Noisette* in which the young choreographer Jirí Blazek (also a dancer), who studied at Gitis in Moscow, attempted to adapt the latest Vainonen conception to the Bratislava stage. Equally controversial was his presentation of *Spartacus,* at the National Theatre in Prague, where the parts played by the soloists threw the whole conception out of balance."

The above is quoted not to digress but to indicate that experiments are going on and, even if they turn out to be not altogether successful (the frank admission is excellent) it must be agreed that to experiment is important and a sign of life. Much the same, then, can be said of the creation of new ballets. The progress made is uneven but it indicates a concern with new ideas.

Jan Hanus has employed a King Lear-like theme from Czech folk tales in *Salt above Gold* and is directly indebted to Shakespeare for *Othello,* both given at the National Theatre in Prague. Jaroslav Doubrava has created a *Don Quixote* for the Brno ballet company but the music remains the best part of it, according to comment; Frantisek Skvor, conductor at the Prague National Theatre, has been inspired by Heine to compose *Dr. Faust;* and Zbynek Vostrák has turned to Grimm for a *Snow White* that has proved popular at six theatres.

Slovakia, with its own centre for ballet at Bratislava, has given the most recent of new works, *The Knight's Ballad* by Simon Jurovsky, to which further reference

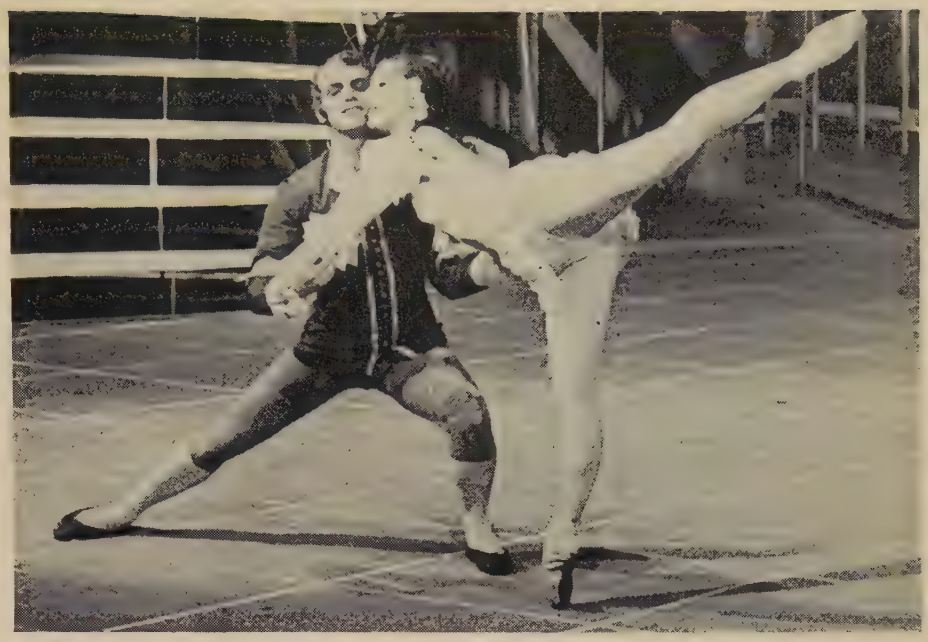
will be made.

Humour has been rather lacking in all this — but not entirely from the stage since *Coppélia* is one of the most frequently performed of ballets — and thus a departure is Jarmil Burghauser's version of the Goldoni comedy *Servant to Two Masters,* again first staged in Prague.

I visited Prague and Bratislava in June and was kindly invited by the two National Theatre managements to see a number of ballets: *Othello, Servant to Two Masters* and, billed together, *Love the Magician* and *Daphnis and Chloë* in Prague and *The Knight's Ballad* at Bratislava. This enabled me to obtain some up-to-date personal impressions, and to them I was fortunate enough to add an interview with Mr. Jirí Nemecek, *chef de ballet* at the National Theatre in Prague, of which an account follows.

To begin with *Othello,* then. In evolution this keeps fairly close to the Shakespeare play and the story is presented in seven scenes. The main rôles were danced by Olga Skálová (Desdemona), Viktor Malcev (Othello) and Karel Vrtiska (Iago). The score did not impress itself on me as particularly interesting, though it has certain pleasant *motifs;* Iago had a sinister "laughing" *motif,* in keeping with a melodramatic concept of the part — but should it have been melodramatic, indeed?

Skálová is a talented dancer, rather short but supple. She is not good looking but she has a distinction which can be strangely dramatic and even appealing. In *Othello* her dancing was cool. She did not seem to warm to the part, but towards the close she achieved a certain moving wistfulness. Malcev was very wooden; I learned afterwards that he had been unwell, which would account for some dullness; but the



SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS: *Three scenes from Nemecek's version of the Goldoni play for the Prague National Theatre. Top right, Viktor Malcev as Florindo and Olga Skálová as Beatrice. Middle right, in Pantalone's house with Vlasta Silhanová as Clarice, Bohumil Klika as the Dancing Master and Antonin Landa as Pantalone. Below, the scene in a Venice Square with Miroslav Kura as Truffaldino, centre, with Jarmila Mansingrová as Smeraldina. Photos: Svoboda.*

working out of his part seemed to me, anyhow, to lack interest and above all, depth. Within the compass of too much melodrama, Vrtiska was satisfying — a lithe dancer with mobile features.

Costumes were not remarkable but suitable. The settings were curiously varied, adopting an impressionistic realism for two scenes, near abstract for a third and a rather sickly picture-frame convention for the remainder. Josef Svoboda, the designer, is responsible for a number of most interesting theatrical settings. He does not hesitate to experiment in stage constructions and lighting; and his approach, in this ballet therefore seemed baffling. Only in the third scene — Cyprus — with a bold use of cubic forms, a deep blue back drop (for "sky and sea"), light and shadow and a great flag suspended from the flies, was there something that made its mark.

Servant to Two Masters was altogether more interesting as a new work. It is a story of misunderstandings set to rights and false dignity made fun of, with an undercurrent of drama. The music is light but acceptable and it contains apposite themes. In the rôle of Truffaldino, the servant, Miroslav Kura gave an excellent performance, full of spirit and mocking gaiety. Olga Skálová, the heroine, was appropriately grave and dashing by turns, for most of the time in her disguise as a man. Others of the company gave good support and, among them, Viktor Malcev appeared happier than in *Othello,* though still in a part that demanded little movement.

The choreography by Jirí Nemecek responded best to the mood of the most humorous moments — Truffaldino's solos, a dance for two old men who are trying to catch a fly and a "duel" in which the disguised heroine surprises herself by worsting a posturing, but timorous, fop. Kura is Czechoslovakia's best male dancer at the present time. He is strong and sure and a good partner. In Burghauser's ballet he showed that he has a sense of comedy. He impressed me more in this than in *Daphnis and Chloë.* It may be that he likes a lyrical rôle less well than a virile one, whether humorous or romantic.

The settings for *Servant to Two Masters* by Vladimir Heller were stylised and colourful and the costumes much better for the men than for the women — some disparity in design seems to have arisen. I liked "A Square in Venice" with the wiry framework of balconies on houses in the foreground and an impression of canal-side buildings painted on a curtain, hanging in folds and so giving a splendidly dappled effect, as background.

In *Daphnis and Chloë* Kura was Daphnis to Skálová's Chloë, and here Skálová danced the better and more thoughtfully. The choreography by Jirí Blazek was stronger for the *ensemble* dances than for the solos or pairs; but I did not have the impression that the conception was out of balance so much as lacking in imaginativeness to a certain extent. The décor by Oldrich Simácek was freely impressionistic and the lighting excellent; but pinkish flesh-tight costumes decorated with sashes, among those designed by Jindriska Hirschová, were surely not the most fortunate of ideas.

The same designers worked on *Love the Magician* and, after the music, their contribution was in this case the best part of the production. The poor dancers had no opportunity to show their talent, not even the attractively pretty Vlasta Silhanová as Candelas. To be charitable, I will say no more than that about the choreography.

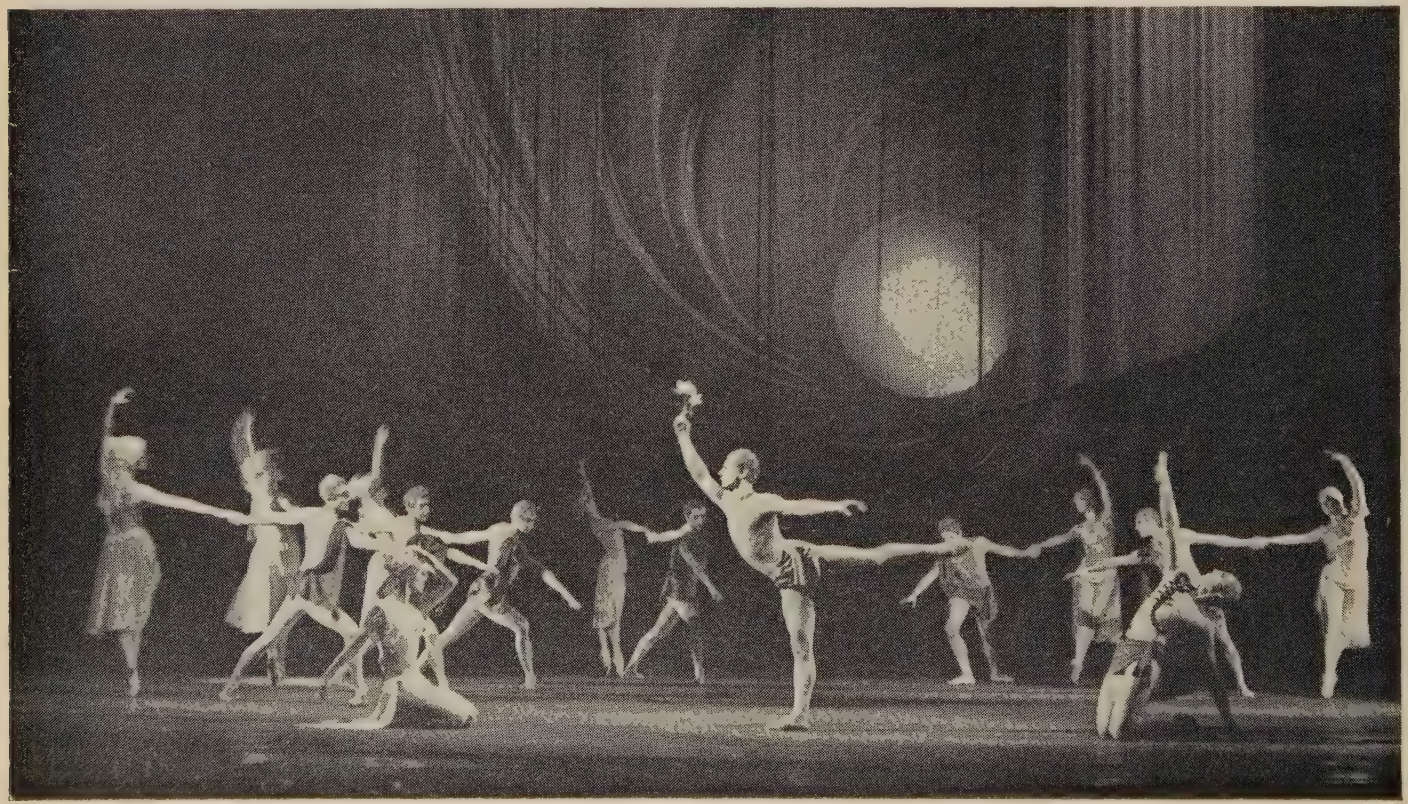
So to ballet at Bratislava and *The Knight's Ballad.* The story, drawn from tradition, is a tragedy with a 15th-century setting. A knight, disfigured in battle on behalf of the Lord of Beckov Castle, is spurned by the nobles and his attempts to return, even though in disguise, are rebuffed. He has fallen in love with a village girl and is a popular hero among the local people with whom he now takes refuge. Meanwhile, villages have come into conflict with the nobles, who are oppressing them, and one of their spokesmen is seized and taken away to the castle. The knight undertakes to help the villagers and to intercede with his overlord but when he arrives a duel is provoked between him and the former, in the course of which he is killed by treachery. The lord of the castle is smitten with terrible remorse at this deed and loses his reason.

Here are dramatic situations and the possibility of active development. The book by Margita Figuli or the choreography by Jozef Zajko, or both in some degree, may have been at fault but the conception was too static and important relations among characters were insufficiently established. Jurovsky's music also was uneven, at times flowing with the action but at others just dull. There should and could have been, I felt, an intensity matching that of a ballet such as *Checkmate.* Only at the end was there an approximation to this, in the duel, the death of the knight and the haunted exit of his slayer.

Jirí Blazek as the knight, Ján, was sure but not of tragic stature. As Tereza, a "creature and spy" of the lord of the castle, both jealous of Ján and wanting to attract him and, finally, the author of treachery, Jita Mnacková danced with passion and as Matilda, Ján's beloved, Galina Kohoutová danced with true tenderness.

The décor and lighting were experimental and interesting, the work of Zbynek Kolár who was co-designer of the costumes — not so successful, I thought them — with

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE: *A scene from the production of Ravel's* Daphnis and Chloë *at the Prague National Theatre. Miroslav Kura, as Daphnis, is seen centre with Olga Skálová, as Chloë, kneeling on the left. As can be seen by this picture, the production is more impressionistic than Ashton's production of the same work for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden.*



Radoslava Mikulová. There was virtually no scenery. The stage was divided longitudinally by a gauze drop and, with lighting, use was made of this to provide a tapestry-like background of performers (behind the curtain) while the main action was pursued downstage. The other feature was a tall pier of metal sheets, tapering towards its base and suggesting the springing of an arch. This caught and reflected lights and colour and afforded rich sparkle. In these details the ballet seen at Bratislava proved to offer more than those seen in Prague.

To sum up my impressions I would say that in a number of dancers Czech and Slovak ballet have quite gifted artists and that a competent *corps de ballet* are beginning to emerge. Experiment is not eschewed and seems likely to be extended. Choreography, however, is a weak point, which is admitted; and to my mind the conception of ballets lacks a certain verve.

The National Theatre ballet company in Prague is of much the same numerical strength as that of the Royal Opera House in London. But the British company is superior in performance on current showing; it has both more "dash" and more polish. Nevertheless, one should not overlook the debt owed to links through personalities and so, also, ideas with the colourful tradition of the great Diaghilev ballet. Ballet in Czechoslovakia does not have this background, nor yet again, to repeat Jan Rey's words, "experience of the tradition" of "Petipa and Ivanov", but with time and practise the disadvantages will surely be made good.

A talk with Nemecek

IT was in a room under the roof, up behind the stage of the National Theatre in Prague, with its proud motto, "The Nation to Itself" which recalls how its building was supported by public funds, that I met Mr. Jirí Nemecek, *chef de ballet* and choreographer and one of the people who, today, are helping Czechoslovak dancers literally enough to find their feet.

With Dr. Henryk Block, in charge of "Archives" at the theatre, to introduce me, I had come to put questions to Mr. Nemecek about his work and views on the present situation in Czech ballet. He was very modest about his own work, however, and preferred to range in a general way over the problems facing the country's ballet and plans for new productions by the National Theatre company. His comments were personal ones nonetheless, of course, and it was interesting to have them and to touch on wider topics.

Nemecek is a young occupant of an important post — barely 40. In appearance he is lean and very much a dancer. His career started at the age of 8, he told me; his brother was working at the National Theatre and so he readily came in contact with the stage, to which he was attracted. At 15 he was dancing at the Theatre but as a visiting artist, not a member of the company, and then he was concerned with performances in operetta for two years.

He came back to work at the National Theatre only to have all plans upset soon after by the outbreak of war and during the war period he was deported to Germany. As soon as he was released and could return home he renewed his contact with the National Theatre and worked at Opava and at Brno, the Moravian capital, as a dancer and a choreographer for operettas. In 1951 he moved to Plzen as *chef de ballet* and choreographer and, he says, acquired valuable experience with a company who did well in several regional festivals. In 1957 he returned once again

JIRI NEMECEK, who is the chef de ballet *and choreographer at the Prague National Theatre.*

to Prague, where he was appointed to his present post at the National Theatre.

Nemecek has done much, it seems, to encourage experiment and new dancers, enlargement of the Theatre's repertoire and search for fresh material. But he did not go into this, as I have mentioned. He spoke, instead, of the company's work as a whole and of certain specific problems. At the same time, there were indications of

THE KNIGHT'S BALLAD: *A scene from Josef Zajko's ballet based on a traditional tragic drama which was created this year at the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava. Jirí Blazek as the Knight Jan (centre), Henrich Hoffstadter as the Lord of Beckov (far left) and Jita Mnacková as Teresa a spy (middle centre). This second Slovak ballet, conceived as an original idea, represented a departure in staging with impressionistic décor and imaginative lighting.* *Photo: Podhorsky.*

the work he is concerned with and the approach he favours.

During the past three years there has been a reorganisation as the result of which there are now three *ensembles* instead of two: one working solely on ballet and two, smaller ones, working with opera. Their separation is not to be rigid, however. In four forthcoming productions of ballet, dancers from both groups are to perform together and Nemecek will study the outcome with a view to further experiments. He commented comically, "I have to even out the sizes of the dancers — there is too much variety in the main *ensemble*!" His more serious purpose will be to establish dancers best suited to different genres for it is his opinion that differentiation is to be made between classical ballet and dancing for operettas.

Nemecek thinks that there is, also, too much of a gap between the standards of the best dancers, such as Kura, Skálová and a few others, and those of the greater part of the *ensembles*, who cannot match up to them; and this is a situation which is receiving attention. Progress has been made in another direction, however. In the past there might be 15 dancers who were kept very busy and 50 or so who were left without enough to do. Things are so arranged now that work is better distributed and during a season (September to early July) three premières can be prepared at once. As regards questions of choreography, Nemecek agreed that there are deficiencies but he feels that ground is being gained again, although the loss sustained in 1952 with the deaths of Sasa Machov and Ivo Vana-Psota still has to be made good. Vana-Psota, he told me, had been with Diaghilev for a time.

Speaking of developments generally, he thought that the various sides of Czechoslovak ballet were growing together reasonably well, that is performance, staging and music, though music was perhaps lagging somewhat. He added that composers keep in touch with the National Theatre over questions of new ideas—and new ideas are forthcoming. Borrowing from Shakespeare again there is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from a traditional Czech story *Boy With a Flower*, from a Spanish comedy *Master of Dancing*, and as an original fantasy *Two Days in the Moon*.

These are some of the ideas under consideration; a number or all of them may emerge to find a place in new programmes. It was important to meet the need to introduce comedy because in this connection not enough had been achieved, Nemecek said. We discussed this point further and it appeared that humorous ballets from abroad could be as much welcome as the dramatic. I described *Pineapple Poll* and this aroused his interest: it was the kind of work that could be readily appreciated.

I then asked him whether any British work or ballets, other than *Prince of the Pagodas*, were known to him. He said that regrettably he had missed the Sadler's Wells visit to Prague in 1947 and so also *The Rake's Progress*, which he had always wanted to see. At Brussels in 1958 he had seen a performance of *Checkmate*, in which Beryl Grey danced; he had liked this very much indeed and thought that audiences in Czechoslovakia would appreciate it too. Technically, the performances of *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Firebird* and *Symphonic Variations*, which he had seen at Brussels as well, had impressed him less favourably.

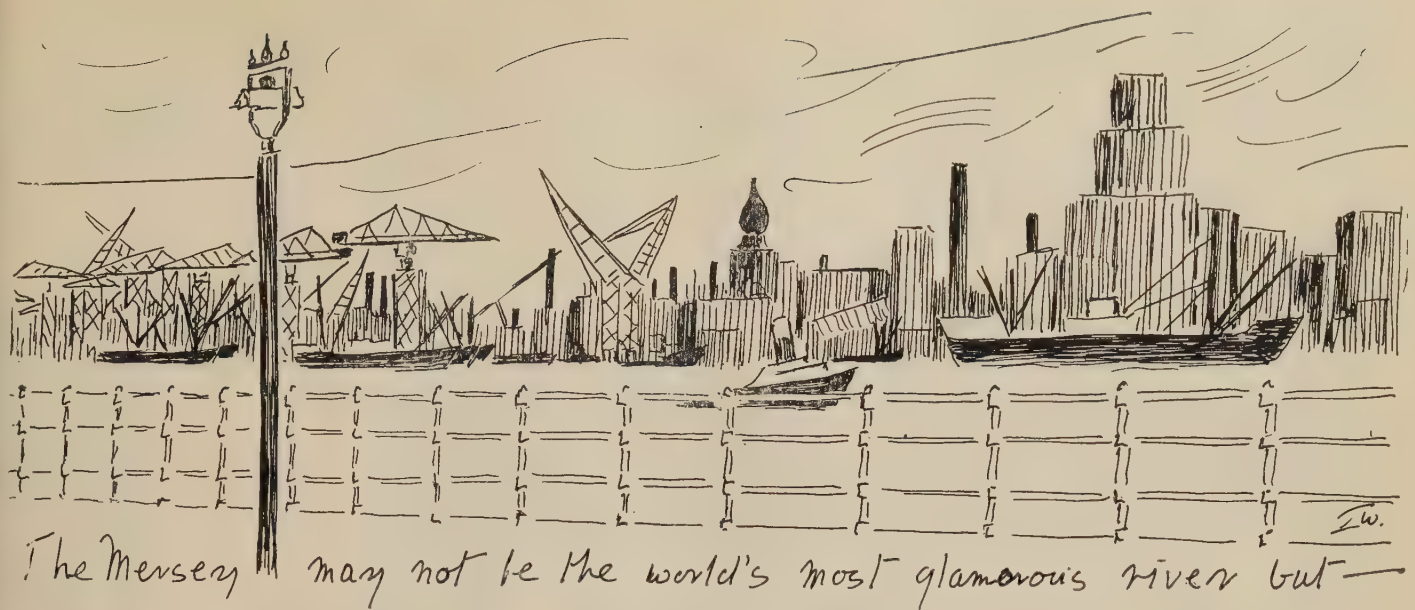
I took him up on mention of *The Firebird*. Are any of Stravinsky's ballets given in Czechoslovakia? Yes. *Petrushka* has been performed in recent years and is to be revived at the National Theatre together with *The Firebird*. Nemecek then spoke of more immediate plans: Prokofiev's *The Stone Flower* and Bartok's *Wooden Prince* for the coming season, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Taras Bulba* to follow, then three Tchaikovsky ballets — all with new settings.

And what about experiments in staging? I know that quite a lot is being done in the Czech theatre but I did not know about ballet (the meeting with Nemecek preceded my visits to the ballet, about which I have written elsewhere). Nemecek told me that he approves of experiment and that he has a bold one in mind. At the Czechoslovak Pavilion in Brussels, during the World Fair, a new entertainment medium was introduced the "Magic Lantern", which marries techniques of the stage and film. Several items in the programme involved dancing; in one, for instance, an artist danced with the projected (film) image of his "dream ballerina" — the artist was Kura, the choreographer Nemecek. The present idea goes much further than this.

Martinu's *Spalicek* is a rich blending of fairy and folk tale material, atmospheric and full of "magic". It is this which might be presented in the new medium. It would lend itself well to such a project and Nemecek has been discussing it with the Alfred Radok, who is associated with the work of the National Theatre, and other members of the team that has created the "Magic Lantern".

Ballet in Czechoslovakia, like the other arts, receive quite generous State assistance. This is in the tradition of "The Nation to Itself". As I left Mr. Nemecek and thanked him, I was thinking of this and wished him all success in making the most of the possibilities before him.

THE "MAGIC LANTERN": A scene from the first programme of the Magic Lantern, *an entertainment using both stage and film techniques which was initially presented at the Czechoslovak pavilion at the Brussels World Fair in 1958.*
The scene is from a dance sequence with Miroslav Kura as the artist with a projected image of his "dream ballerina". While the living dancer occupies the limited space on the stage, the image can grow and diminish in size and occupies an unreal space. This opens the way to fantasy in which spatial dimensions can exceed the normal.



Manzanares to Merseyside

The Ballet Espanol of Pilar Lopez visited one English town — Liverpool — in 1960. Here they gave a week's season starting on September 19, on their way home to Madrid after their long tour of Japan and countries in Europe.

by PETER WILLIAMS

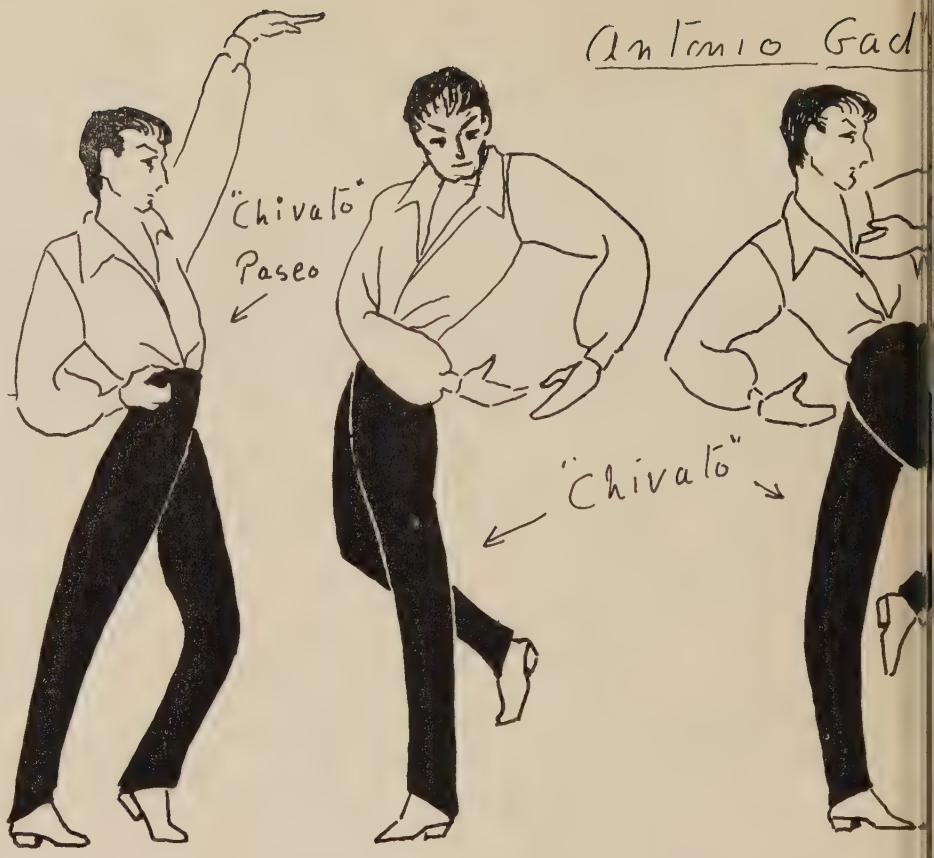
CONTINUING an annual policy of bringing you the world's most exciting cities of the dance, possibly inspired by Ian Fleming's series in the *Sunday Times,* I bring you this year, following in the steps of Copenhagen, Monte Carlo, Genoa, Seville, Beirut and Madrid, among others, a British city — Liverpool. Now even the Liverpudlians, that remarkably unglamorous name for the city's inhabitants, would hardly consider their city to number amongst the world's most exciting, but in some ways they would be quite wrong. What drew me to Liverpool were two things. One was my quite unquenchable thirst for the exotic, and the second was to see what Pilar Lopez had to show. Nothing very exotic about all that you might say, but you see the exotic only becomes so when it is placed in unlikely environment. Once I saw *Les Sylphides* on a steaming night in Andalusia wafted in on a haze of spice and with a concerto of creaking chicadas to accompany the Chopin music — *that* was exotic. Though *Les Sylphides* in London could never be called this, any more than were the spices and chicadas to the Andalusians, the juxtaposition of the two experiences immediately became, to the foreigner, an exotic experience. Likewise the last time I saw the Pilar Lopez company was last year in the Zarzuela Theatre in Madrid, a city whose only apology for a river is that trickle the Manzanares (amazing to relate, it is said that one person gets drowned in it every year) and on whose meagre banks Goya recorded charming and everyday scenes which were used for tapestries. But nobody could say that Spanish ballet in this surrounding was exotic because it was playing on home ground. But to have a Spanish company playing on the banks of that broad waterway of commerce, the Mersey, *that* is really exotic.

Apart from these considerations I find it necessary to see the Pilar Lopez company at least once a year to know how Spanish dancers are developing. No other company shows this so well. Antonio can show us his own great star personality and an elaborate presentation, Luisillo can show us some possible new paths for the Spanish dance, Carmen Amaya can show us — well, Carmen Amaya, and who could ask for more. But it is only Pilar who can show us dancers developing with a great sense of style and schooling, the results of which can be seen all over the world wherever Spanish dance is properly presented with due respect to its great traditions. So that was why I went to Liverpool.

It is a place of which I frankly know very little. Once before I had been there for about three hours in order to see the world première of Alfred Rodrigues' *Saudades* — a not very auspicious occasion — then I know that Donizetti wrote an opera called *Emelia di Liverpool,* and I am still intrigued to know what that could have been all about. But as my sea voyages have never started from that port, it has always remained in my imagination as just a grey and rather rainy blob on the north-west coast of England.

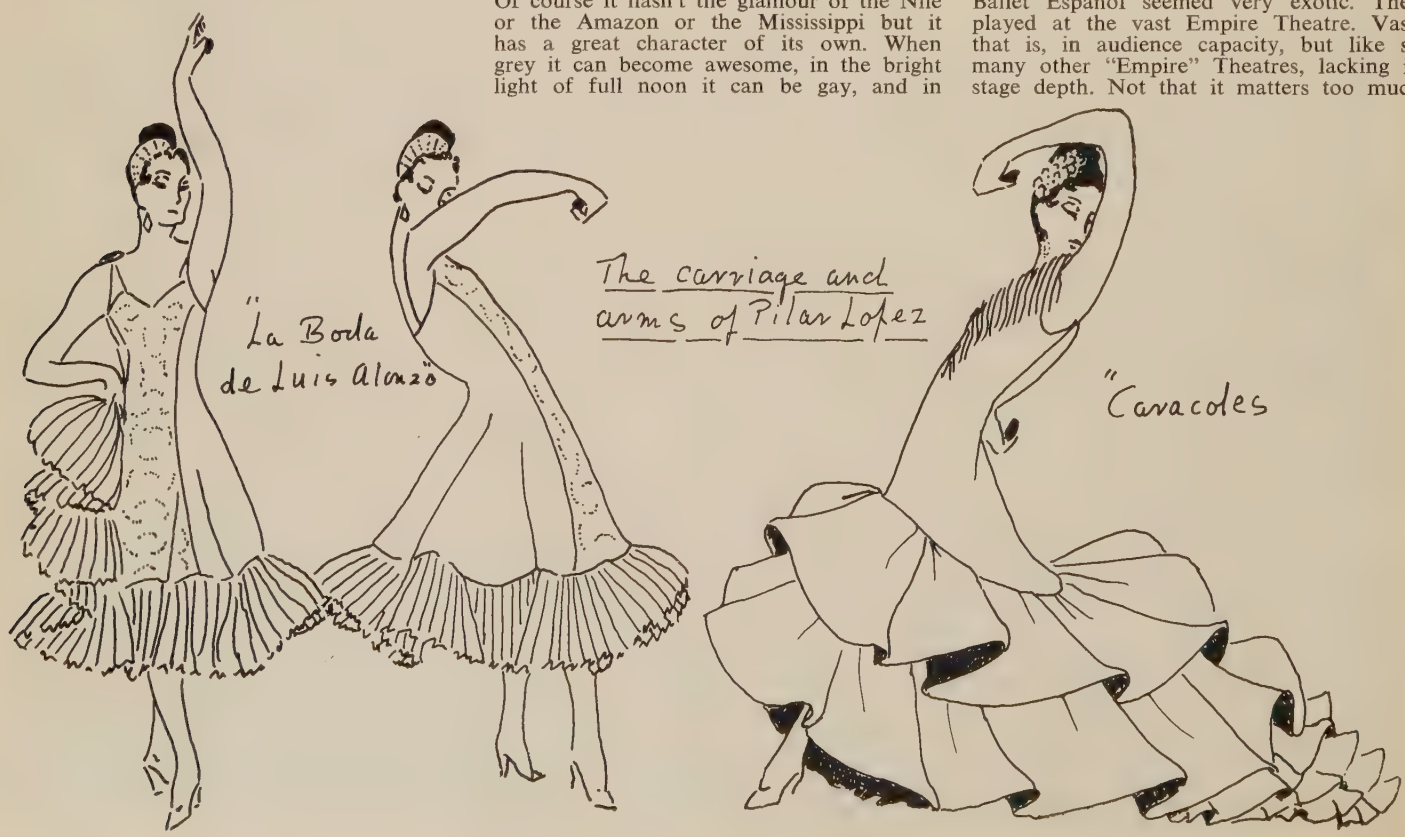
And that is just what it appeared to be on first viewing — just a minor symphony in grey and black. Apart from anything

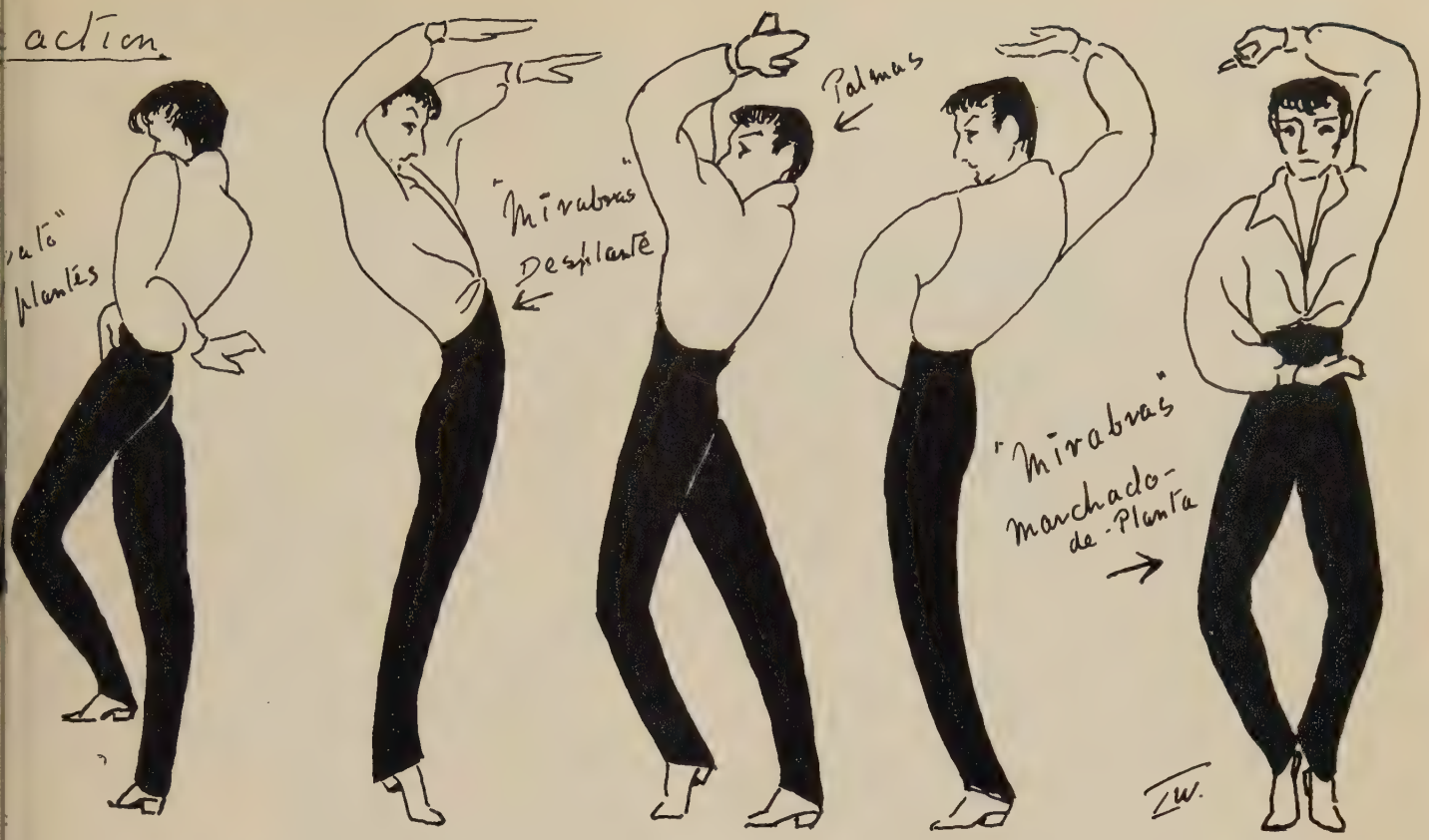
else my first impression of the Liverpudlians was that they were mostly quite dotty, though not as dotty as some of them must have thought me; those, that is, who saw me reading Plato on the banks of the Mersey. However, after a couple of days these things ironed themselves out, and either the dottiness became contagious or else they began to accept one — by the end they became most warm and human. Even the surrounding greyness takes on beautiful shape and somehow those velvet black classical edifices acquire remarkable beauty, as in fact does the whole place. Its hilly slopes are dotted with architectural surprises, even follies ; which reveal themselves so suddenly and unexpectedly that it is only possible to stand still and gape in amazement — it might be a Georgian house in the ineptly named "Paradise Street" or it might be some beautiful ironwork suddenly peeping out behind a multiple chain store, and even those solid-looking monuments to Victorian prosperity can take on the air of Princess Aurora's palace. It seemed to me that a Leonard Rosoman could find his own paradise here and I was shocked to find that the exhibition organised by something called the Merseyside Art Society paid hardly a nod in the direction of the surrounding local beauty — they could muster nothing more than nostalgic, and inaccurate, paintings of Cornwall and a few foreign vistas. The Walker Art Gallery, however, is one of the most pleasing, leisurely and comfortable art galleries I have seen in the English provinces — apart from the Fitzwilliam in Cambridge. It has a very fine collection. The once much-praised and still not completed cathedral, on the other hand, was merely an immense pile of faded rose stone. It appeared to contain every cliché known to ecclesiastical architecture since such edifices were first considered and is, as a result, completely lacking in any sort of character. The one good thing about it is that from its steps the view of the Mersey is magnificent.



Now people don't sing much about the Mersey — they sing endlessly about the aforementioned Manzanares — but the Mersey — No ! Just why I cannot imagine. Of course it hasn't the glamour of the Nile or the Amazon or the Mississippi but it has a great character of its own. When grey it can become awesome, in the bright light of full noon it can be gay, and in the pearly light of early morning its towers and minarets reminded me of nothing so much as the Golden Horn which divides Istanbul. At no time did it ever seem the same and at all times it was busy.

Against this setting, Pilar Lopez and her Ballet Espanol seemed very exotic. They played at the vast Empire Theatre. Vast, that is, in audience capacity, but like so many other "Empire" Theatres, lacking in stage depth. Not that it matters too much





with Spanish companies and specially not with the particular programmes that Pilar presented, but for full ballet companies I cannot see that the difficulties would be any less than they are at the theatre of the same name during the Edinburgh Festival.

To me there was nothing particularly new about the programme, consisting as it did of small items and each half ending with *Suite Espanola* and *Baile y Cante por "Caracoles"* respectively. New though to Liverpool, and this was the first time that the Pilar Lopez company had ever appeared in an English provincial city. A chance date that managed to be squeezed in on the company's way back from a very successful season in Dublin to Madrid, where they have been absent for over a year — a tour of Japan, Holland and France having kept them far from home.

The programme opened, as has become traditional, with *Pepita Jimenez,* in memory of Pilar's sister and founder of the Ballet Espanol — La Argentinita. Then the evening went on in much the same way as is now familiar to those who know this very distinguished company. It is better therefore to talk about the individual dancers rather than to reconsider the programme as a whole.

What is it then that makes Pilar Lopez the foremost lady in the Spanish dance theatre? In the first place she has inherited so much from her wonderful sister. But inheritance is never quite enough, it is what you make of this inheritance that counts in the end. Pilar has inherited from Argentinita a sense of theatre and a sense of style and fitness. It is the combination of these things that make her presentations, her own personal performance and her teaching of the younger generation, something that is unique in the Spanish dance of our time. Style on its own is not quite enough either — there are a number of stylish Spanish dancers around — but it is applying this style to what takes place within the proscenium arch that matters in the theatre. In addition to this there is also the question of character and personality. On the stage Pilar can be gay and warm in a Zarzuela or regional number or in flamenco *cante chico;* in the graver flamenco *Cante Jondo* she can reach great heights and depths of emotion. Much of this is bound up with her character in private life — she is infinitely generous and kind, even to those who have left her, and also to those many artists who try to copy her material. Her sense of humour is delicious, at moments gloriously bawdy, and she has a knife-edge perception that can turn most

of life's more pompous moments to kindly ridicule. Parallel to all this runs her sense of fitness and discipline in the theatre — wrong *tempi* from a musician or laxity in anybody's performance is dealt with immediately, firmly, and even explosively. The cares of the drearier side of running a company are taken off her shoulders by her husband, Tomás Rios, who was once one of the most popular conductors and composers in Spain — even dolls were made in his likeness, for as well as being a popular figure he also closely resembled Leslie Howard. Today he looks like a young Paul Whiteman and deals with all the directional side of the company — no easy matter when you have to cope with Spanish temperament, world touring complications and different currency. But the past dies hard, because his more serious business books are enlivened with his poetry, lyrics and bars of a new musical composition.

This then is the background against which Pilar Lopez continually works, and she also has the energy that is only matched by two other great ballet ladies — Dame Ninette de Valois and Marie Rambert. But then they don't dance and Pilar does — many times in each programme.

In the programme under consideration she gave four solos, in addition to other numbers in which she appeared with a partner or with the company. The aforementioned *Pepita Jimenez* and her *La Boda de Luis Alonso* come into the same category being purely of the Spanish classical school. The former gives any programme its style from the outset because anyone who understands these things can see immediately that here is something which has — and no other word fitly describes it — class. Just to see the way that Pilar enters is enough — the upper part of the body held slightly back, the head likewise and which turns so as to make a perfect composition with her arms, the feet always perfectly placed. Much gayer is her later solo to the music from Jeronimo Jimenez' *La Boda de Luis Alonso,* which is a gem of the classical school at the turn of the century. This dance is a most complicated filigree of castanet playing, zapateado and stylish deportment. What is more, Pilar makes contact with the audience, never overdone, which is such an essential part of this school. No Spanish dancer that I know could give such a perfect example of this school.

The arms play a most vital part in everything that Pilar dances, whether it be classical or flamenco. She has the sort of arms which I consider to be essential for Spanish dance at its best — they appear to be boneless without being flabby and have strength while still remaining feminine. I found while making drawings of her during the performance, a few of which are reproduced here, that when it came to her arms it was impossible to do anything other than flowing curves. What to me is wrong is when the elbow forms an angle, and there are too many dancers like this. Which means that for ladies to be supreme in Spanish dance they have to have a certain amount of flesh on their bones — skinny ones just won't do, and Carmen Amaya is the exception to prove this rule.

Although not a gypsy, Pilar Lopez has assimilated the older and purer schools of Andalusian flamenco to a remarkable extent — more so than any of the performing gypsies that I have seen (there are many older gypsies I haven't seen who carry on the traditions), and her performance of *Cante Matrices* (source songs in the *jondo* group) such as a *Soleares* or a *Siguiriyas,* are exemplary. In the programme of which we are speaking she danced a *Soleares* — *Puente Trianero (The day of the earthquake the water rose righ . . . Bridge of Triana the parapet fell down . . . our love will not end even if the skies should fall).* Although of course the feet play an important part, the main emphasis in all this flamenco group lies in the expressiveness of the upper part of the body (it would

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"Caracoles" (snails) - It's a stirring spectacle when the seven principals dance

Spain in Japan

At the invitation of the Osaka International Festival, Pilar Lopez and her Ballet Espanol paid their first visit to Japan during this Spring and early Summer. Travelling there and back by sea, they spent several weeks on Japanese soil for, in addition to Osaka, they also gave performances in Kobe, Nagoya and Tokyo. Everywhere they found wonderful and understanding audiences and tremendous kindness. Pilar found that there were certain similarities between the Spanish and Japanese languages and very decided similarities in the music. The theatres were large (with capacities of three and four thousand) and the stages were extremely well equipped. It is in these theatres that the touring section of the Royal Ballet may well be playing and where they are assured of a great welcome.

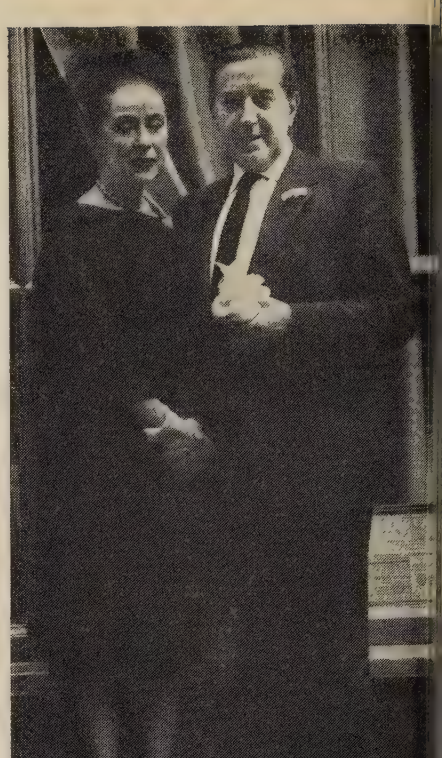
ABOVE : Pilar Lopez with her husband, Tomás Rios, and the company on the bus between Kobe and Osaka.

ABOVE : The Pilar Lopez company in the Jota *which ends the* Suite Iberia.

RIGHT : The final movement of Concierto de Aranjuez *with the principal members of the company.*

BELOW : Pilar Lopez and the company in Chuflillas des Puerto, *the amusing dances with which the programmes are ended.*

BELOW : Pilar Lopez receiving bouquets from little Japanese girls who swarmed on to the stage and gave flowers to everyone after each performance.



RESPONSIBLE FOR NEW SUCCESSES: Left, Dame Ninette de Valois in front of the fountain adjoining the Hotel Plaza in New York (Photo: Arthur Todd). Centre, Nadia Nerina, Svetlana Beriosova, Anya Linden and Annette Page arriving at Idlewild Airport (Photo: BOAC). Right, Frederick Ashton with Martha Graham after a birthday luncheon given in his honour at L'Aiglon Restaurant (Photo: Arthur Todd).

New York Return

The Royal Ballet's Sixth American Tour

by ARTHUR TODD

WHEN Ninette de Valois, Director of The Royal Ballet, arrived in America on September 4, two days ahead of the company, there was already an advance sale of over $500,000 worth of tickets at The Metropolitan Opera House for the four-week season prior to the trans-continental tour. And, as in four of their five previous visits, *The Sleeping Beauty* was the ballet presented for the very Gala première at the Met. on September 11. For once, the weather was not swelteringly hot and the elegant audience and, one hopes, the dancers were considerably more comfortable. At any event, the dancers once more captivated the audience completely.

As revised and elaborated by Oliver Messell, the new drop cloth before the final act seemed to be in more appropriate taste than some of his more highly coloured costumes which, at times, were almost overpowering. One presumes, too, that he was responsible for the blue-grey wigs now worn by the Three Ivans and these hair pieces in this colour couldn't be more out of key with the characters. However, some of the other revisions, especially the Panorama scene for the Prince and the Lilac Fairy considerably enhance the story line of the ballet.

Dame Ninette is always one to toss new surprises to an audience and on opening night she provided a delightful one in the person of Deanne Bergsma as the Lilac Fairy. Serene, gracious and lovely, this young dancer won the hearts of the audience in no time at all. The big moment of the evening, as always, was Margot Fonteyn's entrance, which was greeted with prolonged cheers. Her characterisation, musicality and luminosity were totally in evidence and if some noted a slight diminishing of her technical powers, especially in her elevation and some of her turns, these were indeed minor matters. As usual, too, Brian Shaw won an ovation for his brilliant Bluebird *pas de deux* danced with Annette Page. For those with fond memories of previous first nights, Beryl Grey, Rowena Jackson, Violetta Elvin, Pamela May and Philip Chatfield were deeply missed. However, it is the ephemeral nature of ballet companies, and even dancers themselves, to change so we had no right to expect a *Sleeping Beauty* exactly as it was previously. What I did notice, however, was a certain lassitude on the part of the *corps* during the major *soli* and *pas de deux*. Instead of behaving as characters in a setting, as the Bolshoi *ensemble* always did, I had a feeling that they were really just a group of charming dancers watching each other perform. This held true of almost everyone save three of the pillars of the company—Julia Farron, Gerd Larsen and Leslie Edwards.

IN a delightful programme note to introduce this ballet, Tamara Karsavina writes, "The story of *La Fille Mal Gardée* lends itself admirably to ballet treatment; there is not a dance in it that does not flow directly out of an actual situation." Certainly, this is a perfectly delicious work from every point of view and, as John Martin claimed in his next morning's review in the *New York Times*, "The piece is a triumph! . . . There is no mistaking Ashton's genius."

From this observer's point of view Nadia Nerina and David Blair have never been seen to better effect in New York nor, for that matter, have Alexander Grant and Stanley Holden been used to such great advantage. Nadia Nerina danced like a dream in this work and, what's more, her warmth and personality were much more in evidence than in her previous New York performances. David Blair has also matured considerably as an artist and as a dancer since his last visit to New York and his one-arm "Bolshoi" lift of Nerina evoked cheers. Stanley Holden was a delight as the Widow Simone but it was Alexander Grant, in the rôle of Alain, that turned in the greatest performance of the evening, both in his actual dancing as well as in his marvellously delineated character study. Here, certainly, is an artist that dances with his entire body and every facial expression and gesture is

expressive. On the second seeing of this work, it was evident, at least to me, that Grant's performance, with its Chaplinesque pathos, was the towering asset of the evening and this is in no sense meant to negate the dancing of Nerina, Blair or Holden because, quite frankly, I have never enjoyed any of them as much as this before.

The ballet itself is full of such charming and inventive *soli, pas de deux* and *ensemble* numbers that one could easily devote an entire article to their praise. Suffice to say, I was particularly taken by Ashton's masterful use of the ribbon device for Nerina's solo, again in her *pas de deux* with Blair as well as in the meticulously staged maypole number. Again, this work provides ample evidence of the way this choreographer creates to the abilities of the dancers that he has chosen and it is both rewarding and illuminating to see the relationships that he sets up between his characters. Speaking of his own choreography in an "off the record" manner, Ashton has declared, "I believe in love" and this is immediately apparent in the tender and glowing passages that he has devised for Lise and Colas in this ballet. Interestingly enough, the *corps* has never been seen to better effect in the first half of this season than in this ballet. Here, for once, they all dance and act like characters, filling the entire ballet with a rural sunniness.

THOSE of us fortunate enough to see a preview of *Ondine* in the film of the Royal Ballet before the company arrived (it had its official New York screening première on October 4 at the Normandie Theatre) were already aware that this was indeed the towering portrayal in Fonteyn's career. When it came to her live performance, however, it was, if possible, even more superb. As in Ashton's lovely *Daphnis and Chloë,* Fonteyn emerges as a woman and not just a remarkable executant of 19th-century classical ballets. What's more, it is increasingly evident that Fonteyn, rather than being considered by some as on the brink of retirement, is, instead, on the verge of what may be the greatest and richest period of her career. Her Ondine certainly ranks in magnificence with Markova's Giselle and Ulanova's Juliet in our time.

Aside from this creation of the four central rôles for Fonteyn, Farron, Somes and Grant, however, I find that Ashton's choreographic virtuosity is not nearly so well fulfilled as in *La Fille mal Gardée.* Though he has composed this ballet in a straight, continuing narrative form with no set stops for *soli* and *pas de deux,* as it were, the work appears to be at its most creative when it is dealing with its central characters. His scene, for instance, for the loading of the ship in the second act finds the sailors going through the traditional actions that one might find in an opera. Also his divertissements for the third act seem to have little relation to the story line and here, I think, some of his larger *ensemble* scenes seemed blurred and lacking in focus. Also, some of his poses and sequences for the sylphs seemed more William Blake and early Denishawn than aqueous.

The production is a very handsome one indeed as far as the settings are concerned. Fonteyn's shift-like costume allows her bodily line and movement to dominate every scene, as did Ulanova's in *Romeo and Juliet,* but the gold and silver costumes for the wedding guests in the third act appeared not only Hollywood in effect but completely obscured dance movement as such. Hans Werner Henze's score is indeed a stunning one and, if it is perhaps a bit too modern for the period and the plot, it is, nevertheless, a wonderful adjunct to the major dance sequences.

HAVING witnessed only the Gala Première, one *Ondine,* two performances of *La Fille Mal Gardée* and one *Le Lac des Cygnes,* it is indeed difficult at this half-way stage of the season, as we go to press, to comment fully or authoritatively on the company and repertoire as a whole. As previously, the lyric and lovely Svetlana Beriosova excelled in the rôle of Odette-Odile and she was gallantly, if not superbly, partnered by the long-awaited Donald Macleary. Although he obviously has the physical equipment to make him a *danseur noble* one day, John Martin found that he made Siegfried "a prep-school prince". However, one awaits further seeings of Macleary, especially in *Antigone,* before making a final verdict. This Cranko ballet, MacMillan's *Baiser de la Fée,* Lynn Seymour's American debut, Fonteyn's Giselle, and an assessment of the season as a whole will appear in our December issue.

MASSINE IN THE NORTH

Continued from page 11

Epilogue. The triumph of Virtue

"GRISELDA (Tatiana Massine Jr.) personifies Virtue. A Prince (Milorad Miskovitch) marries a shepherdess, but after some years separates her from her children and drives her from the palace. More years pass and she is recalled to the palace, to serve a mysterious new princess, who is finally revealed to be her own daughter (Nicole Nogaret). Griselda is reunited to the Prince and all celebrate, including the Narrators, who find that they can ride the land of pestilence and keep the fear of Death at bay."

IF the organisers of the Festival deserve praise for bringing the Massine company to Britain, they also deserve blame for not persuading Massine to leave *La Commedia Umana* in Italy. This vast, sprawling, pointless ballet turned out to be a choreographic blunder of gigantic proportions.

On the face of it, these stories adapted from Boccaccio's *Decameron* could never have been made into a ballet, as their narratives are far too complex for the limited narrative power of dancing. On the other hand in his vintage years Massine, in such a work as *The Three-Cornered Hat,* based on an Alarcon fable, showed an almost unbelievable ability to make a complicated story clear in ballet terms. But what he could do once, it appears he can now do no more, and certainly his *Commedia Umana* was quite incomprehensible without constant reference to the printed scenario.

There is very little that needs to be said about the choreography. It had a sort of competence in that it at least never quite petered out, yet it was so full of padding, so loaded down with triviality, so lacking in any real inspiration or originality, that the total effect was crushingly dispiriting. In fairness there were a few patches of quality among some of the solos and *pas de deux,* although it would be an exceptionally clear-minded man who could say whether these qualities were absolute or merely comparative, locked as they were within the surrounding mediocrity.

Perhaps I should add that structurally Massine and his literary collaborator, Vittore Branca, had tried to impose a form upon the virtually separate ballets making up the whole, by grouping them under such titles as "The Triumph of Fortune", "The Triumph of Love," etc. However, these devices, while quite apparent in the synopsis, proved completely unintelligible on the stage.

The one real quality of the ballet was in its suggestion of a genuinely medieval atmosphere, and this Massine sustained moderately well throughout the entire evening. In this he was helped by the music, which while in itself monotonous and unsuitable for choreographic purposes, had been based on authentic medieval airs. He was also assisted by the curiously stylised settings and costumes of Alfred Manessier. These designs — and there were dozens of sets and well over two hundred costumes — succeeded in conveying an appropriate sense of period while being in themselves quite modern.

On the first night in Edinburgh, the ballet looked very under-rehearsed, and even by the Saturday matinée (at which two complete sections of the work were omitted without so much as an announcement from the stage) the performance still had ragged edges. The outstanding performance in the ballet came from Miskovitch, but most of the soloists did their best in what must have been extremely trying circumstances.

CONCLUSION

BECAUSE criticism is almost the opposite process to artistic creation (analysis as opposed to synthesis) it is generally easier to write entertainingly when attacking something than when praising it. Consequently most critics superficially appear to write with more relish when burying Caesar than when praising him. Yet there can be few critics who really enjoy playing the assassin, even when they conceive it as their job. When one has to play assassin to a figure such as Massine, the task is particularly distasteful and depressing.

This whole Edinburgh season was by and large a disaster. Looking at *Commedia Umana* and also recalling Massine's other creations over the past twenty years or so, I cannot but regretfully record my opinion that creatively his powers have now dwindled away to little more than competence. I would be delighted, but in this particular case more than usually surprised, to be proved wrong.

However, this is not to say that Massine's company, the future of which seems in a certain doubt at the moment, could not play a significant part in European ballet. Personally I feel that the revivals Massine has so far chosen have not been well selected, and the company itself badly needs the chance to mature. If he were to make the company a shop-window for the best creations of his vintage years, concentrating of course on his Diaghilev ballets, and also to add to these authoritative revivals of the Fokine repertory, he would have the basis of a very fine and important company. New works, and this would obviously be a brave pill for Massine to swallow, should perhaps be exclusively entrusted to younger choreographers. The company might then fairly represent the genius of one of the masters of 20th-century ballet. If Massine was once over-praised, he is now under-estimated. A great company producing the best of his ballets could prompt the revaluation of his work which is now overdue.

EVE OF DEPARTURE: Left, before leaving for their tour of South Africa, Anton Dolin and John Gilpin went to the Albert Hall to hear the Leningrad Symphony Orchestra. They are seen here with Nina Timofeyeva, Victor Hochhauser (who presented the orchestra), Alicia Markova, Gennady Rozhdestvensky (conductor in Leningrad also at the Bolshoi and husband of Timofeyeva) and Mrs. John Gilpin. *Photo: D. and D.*

Right, some members of London's Festival Ballet about to leave Festival Hall on their way to Bermuda where they gave ten performances during the island's ballet week (September 28 to October 6). They are Jean-Pierre Alban, Deirdre O'Conaire, Marilyn Burr, Ben Stevenson and Jelko Yuresha. Their concerts included classical and contemporary items.

curtain up!

Stars in the afternoon

OVER the years, Dame Margot Fonteyn has built up the annual RAD matinée into one of the most important and most international post-luncheon dancing events. Personally she has spent months in collecting together dancers from all over the world who she feels to be of interest for the British public to see. It is a great tribute to her greatness and to the deep affection in which she is held by the whole dancing profession that they come happily and willingly, quite often at considerable sacrifice to themselves.

This year she is assisted by Marie Rambert, whose vitality and international outlook is equal to that of Dame Margot's, and I know that between the two of them they will manage to put on a show that will be worth every penny of the seat price — not only will you be getting a wonderful afternoon of dancing but you will also be contributing towards the splendid work of the Royal Academy of Dancing.

Again the matinée will take place at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on December 8 and *not* at Covent Garden, as some misinformation caused us to announce a few months ago. Already a formidable array of stars have promised to appear. Dame Margot, on short leave of absence from the Royal Ballet's American tour, will appear with Michael Somes in the "ballroom" scene from Ashton's *Apparitions,* supported by the touring section of the Royal Ballet. Then Alicia Markova is to appear in a new solo and John Gilpin will dance a solo from Frank Staff's *Czernyana,* which was originally created for him and which nobody has danced since. At the moment of writing other British stars include Lucette Aldous and Belinda Wright, while others are still under consideration.

Of the foreign contingent we shall see, for the first time in this country, the two Tallchief sisters appearing on the same stage. Marjorie will dance with her husband, George Skibine, and Vladimir Skouratoff in Skibine's delightful horse ballet — *Idylle.* Maria will dance with that great Danish male star — Erik Bruhn. It is also hoped that a very famous Soviet ballerina (one you've always wanted to see but so far have not) will appear, but, like so many invitations to Soviet artists, a definite reply has not yet been received. In addition to all this there will be other foreign imports which will be announced later.

Two other stars will appear, though not on the stage before an audience, and they are the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret. So it should be a glittering milky way on both sides of the footlights. Also, like everything connected with the RAD's daytime events, you can be assured that the display of millinery will be "out of this world".

She's back

ALL those who, having heard her non-stop appearances on the BBC's sound radio, thought that she had forsaken the stage for public speaking can now rest assured that Markova is to be very much seen upon the boards again. After her long illness she is to return to the Royal Ballet and I know that readers will join me in saying how deeply happy we are. She is to dance with the Royal Ballet (touring company) during its seasons in Oxford, Bristol and Bournemouth, and, later in London. So as to get gradually used to the stage again she will start by appearing in *Les Sylphides,* of which ballet there is no greater exponent alive, and will be partnered by Bryan Ashbridge. Later she intends to return to *Giselle,* about which ballet she has just written a book, *Giselle and I* (published by Barrie & Rockliff at 25/-), and which will be reviewed next month. Next Spring, Markova will return to America, but it is hoped by us all that she will make her returns to the Royal Ballet more than an annual event.

Welcome visitors

THIS blank Autumn, dance-wise, will not be so blankety-blank soon for Zizi Jeanmaire is returning to us. On November 2 she appears at the new Royalty Theatre in a revue. She is to dance and sing and her performance will include the first performance of a new ballet, with choreography by her husband Roland Petit, based on Somerset Maugham's play *Rain.* The rôle of Sadie Thompson would seem to be ideal for Zizi and she should breathe new life into this famous "fallen lady" as she once did to the cigarette factory slut — Carmen.

London has always held Zizi in deep affection, as was witnessed by her remarkable ovation when she just appeared as a member of the public in a box at the Adelphi Theatre last year. Having been present at the Alhambra Theatre in Paris when she first gave her "Tour de Chant" a few years ago, I can tell you that her singing is as exciting as her dancing. In fact she is certainly one of the great "vedettes" of France, possibly of the world, and in the same eminent line as Mistinguette and Josephine Baker.

Peter Daubeny will follow this season at the Royalty by presenting another of the world's stars — Antonio — for a season possibly lasting twelve weeks. Next year he promises us a return visit of Jerome Robbins' Ballets: U.S.A. From this it looks as though Daubeny is well back in the dance arena from which he has been absent for far too long.

Just as we go to press, news has come through that that famous Indian dancer, Indrani, will be appearing at the St. Pancras Town Hall, London, in the early days of November (for details, see "Ballet Dates"). With her small group of dancers and musicians, also appearing here, she has just had a highly successful season in the States. So successful that she had to pay a return visit to New York.

There have been rumours of other visitors floating around but nothing definite has been heard of the rumoured visit of the Marquis de Cuevas International Ballet, who are

about to mount the full-length *Sleeping Beauty* in Paris. This may be due to the serious illness of the Marquis himself, who we all wish a speedy recovery. Nor has anything been heard of a visit from the Massine company, though it is an open secret that Massine would like to bring it to London. The promised visit of the Nora Kaye-Herbert Ross Ballet of Two Worlds, planned for December, is unlikely to take place for reasons that you will find in Arthur Todd's American news in this issue. However, the winter looks not so doleful as it did a few weeks ago.

Half a century old

SOMETIMES it seems as though the eleven years of *Dance and Dancers* has been a lifetime, but really we are but babes-in-arms to our contemporary, *The Dancing Times,* which has just celebrated its fiftieth birthday and to whom we send our heartiest congratulations. This remarkable longevity is due to the work of P. J. S. Richardson, who not only started, *and* kept going, a magazine on dance at a time when such a thing was almost unheard of, but also was instrumental in organising the Royal Academy of Dancing, the Camargo Society, those valuable Sunshine Matinées and for bringing ballroom dancing to a level of dignity amongst so many other things. At a dinner, organised by the London Ballet Circle, at the Dorchester on October 2, he pointed out some of the many changes that had taken place during his long reign. Others who paid tribute to him were Dame Adeline Genée, Marie Rambert, Alicia Markova and many others of the ballet and ballroom's great names. Dame Ninette de Valois and Frederick Ashton could not be present owing to the Royal Ballet's American tour, while Tamara Karsavina and Beryl Grey were absent owing to illness — but they all sent messages.

There is just one little point on which *The Dancing Times* and ourselves do not see eye to eye. They insist that we (and everybody else) call choreography "choregraphy", the version with the second "o" is not allowed to sully their pages. Not allowed, that is, until the number before the anniversary — when there suddenly appeared a large advertisement for *The Princess* with the word "choreography" prominently featured. Our good wishes are mingled with our sincere condolences on this sad lapse.

More Sunday ballets

AFTER the very warm reception for their last programme (including Ray Powell's popular *One in Five),* the committee of Sunday Ballet Club were a little nervous about their next performance, feeling that they would be told it was not so good.

However, they have done their best to ensure another success by inviting some established choreographers to mount new works. These include Michael Charnley, whose *Symphony for Fun* and other work for the theatre has proved so popular, and Peter Darrell, responsible for *The Prisoners* and other works for Western Theatre Ballet in addition to much TV and theatre whose *Symphony for Fun* and other works he is trying to break away from the "sylphides" conception of this composer.

New scores are being composed for the remaining two works which will have choreography by Dennis Carey (his first ballet in England although he has produced several abroad) and Leo Kharibian (now appearing in *West Side Story).*

At the present moment it seems as though the Club will return to the Lyric Theatre on November 13.

Dancer into Monkey

DANCERS, especially character dancers, are used to being asked to play a variety of animals, birds and insects on the stage. Cats, dogs, butterflies, bluebirds, seagulls, spiders, foxes, lobsters, snails — they might be any of these at the whim of a choreographer, and many other familiar and unfamiliar beasts besides.

But when a dancer makes a break with ballet and appears in a straight play, he usually expects to appear as a human being. No such luck, however, for Peter Clegg, the ex-Royal Ballet soloist now playing the title part in the Mermaid Theatre's *Mr. Burke, M.P.* For the play sets out to show just how credulous people may be about politics and Mr. Burke is — a monkey.

Another recent departee from the Royal Ballet, Pirmin Trecu, has however found himself doing something different to what he did when he was with the company. He has arranged the dances for the Zefferelli production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Old Vic. After a two-month holiday in his native Spain, Trecu is back with a lot of ideas, amongst them a return to active dancing, though not, he tells me, in a nightly classical repertory.

MacMillan's composer killed

MATYAS SEIBER, whose music Kenneth MacMillan is using for his new work *The Invitation* for the Royal Ballet (touring company), was born in Hungary but came to England in 1935 and lived here ever since.

His sudden death in a car accident in South Africa will mean a loss to British music, for as composer, teacher and conductor he commanded both respect and affection.

British ballet has long lagged behind some of its rival countries in the use it made of distinguished living musicians, in spite of one or two obvious exceptions, and I very much hope that MacMillan's enterprise in choosing the score for his new work will be followed by other equally imaginative ideas from other British choreographers. It is time the black hand was painted on all works emerging from the gramophone record shop.

happy birthday to...

		November
Jean-Pierre Alban	London's Festival Ballet	14
Bryan Ashbridge	The Royal Ballet	25
Jocelyn Vollmar	San Francisco Ballet	25
Peter Wright	In *Flower Drum Song*	25
Patricia Cox	Teaching in Australia	26
Nicholas Magallanes	New York City Ballet	27
Philippe Perrottet	Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet	29
Doreen Draisey	Ballet Rambert	30
		December
Alicia Markova		1
Shirley Dixon	Ballet Rambert	1
Philip Chatfield	In New Zealand	2
Harold Turner	Royal Ballet Organisation	2
Irene Siegfried	Ballet Rambert	2
Moyra Fraser		3
Zdravko Bayer	De Cuevas International Ballet	4
Lupe Serrano	American Ballet Theatre	7
Grant Strate	Canadian National Ballet	7
Estella Nova	Borovansky Ballet	9
Miro Zolan	The Opera, Teheran	10
Joan Blakeney	The Royal Ballet	11
Kenneth MacMillan	Royal Ballet choreographer	11
Gayrie MacSween	Ballet Rambert	12
Shirley Cash	Canadian National Ballet	13
Nicholas Polajenko	De Cuevas International Ballet	15
Anna Truscott	Ballet Rambert	17
Annette Page	The Royal Ballet	18
Geoffrey Corbett	London's Festival Ballet	21
Alan Carter	Choreographer in Holland	24
David Lichine		25

Dancer You Will Know

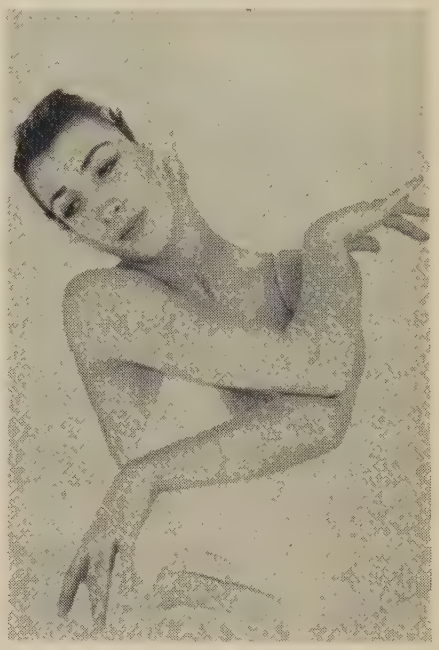


Photo : Pic.

CLAIRE MOTTE

BORN in Paris on December 21, 1937. She entered the School of Dance of the Paris Opéra at the age of ten and four years later was dancing in the corps de ballet. *She rapidly attracted attention with her musicality and authority, and before long became a Coryphée. In 1956 Claire Motte was named as a Danseuse of the Paris Opéra. Among her teachers have been Carlotta Zambelli and Yves Brieux, and she has studied* pas de deux *work with Serge Lifar.*

Ballets Claire Motte has appeared in have been: La Tragedie de Salomé, Suite en Blanc, Etudes, La Symphonie Fantastique, Chemin de Lumière, Casse Noisette, Variations *(Lifar),* La Valse, Printemps à Vienne, La Dame a la Licorne, Le Palais de Cristal, La Mort du Cygne, Nuages et Fêtes.

ALTHOUGH Claire Motte's career has been almost exclusively with the Paris Opéra, she has toured in Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, and in June of 1958 appeared with the company in Moscow. On this last occasion she made her début on the Bolshoi stage dancing the third movement of Balanchine's *Le Palais de Cristal,* known in England as *Symphony in C.* Recently she has also danced Odette in the second act of *Swan Lake* for the Opera of Nice.

Exceptionally well endowed physically, Claire Motte has shown a rare precocity that has made her the most brilliant hope of the Opéra. The traditions of the Opéra's rigid hierarchy and the constraints which this imposes has not been to her advantage, and without doubt she would have been permitted to have bloomed more freely in an independent troupe or a foreign company. Nevertheless, her smallest appearances are always warmly appreciated A splendid virtuoso, she has given evidence of a "legato" grace and a rare artistic sensibility. Soon she is to appear as Giselle, Odette and in further modern rôles, and her potential range leads us to expect much of her.

M-F. C.

LA REVENANTE: *A scene from the work which Molly Lake and Travis Kemp produced for the Conservatoire in Ankara. Meric Sumen and Canturk Sakarya with the corps de ballet.* *Photo: Osman Darcan.*

Progress in Turkey

by MOLLY LAKE

A few years ago, Molly Lake wrote about the work that she and her husband, Travis Kemp are doing at the National Conservatoire in Ankara. Here is the latest report on their work in bringing classical ballet to the Middle East.

AFTER nearly six years abroad at a stretch one has a very natural longing for the life and ways of one's own country. But such is our liking for, and belief in, the Turkish dancers that we find it too hard to leave them and return to England.

We have now between eighty and a hundred dancers in the Conservatoire at Ankara, of whom nearly one-third are boys, and about thirty graduates. Some of the latter form the Opera Ballet and some, it is hoped, will form the nucleus of the future Turkish National Ballet.

The last five and a half years have not been easy ones but at least from the plain dancing point of view they have been extremely rewarding. Matching the dancers here, age for age, with their European counterparts, I think that the Turkish dancer has the advantage. Perhaps the fact that they do not lend themselves to discipline at all easily is "balletically" (is there such a word?) more to their advantage than their disadvantage in that they cannot be regimented. Thus each keeps his or her own personal charm and they show a much more spontaneous reaction to musical movement than is usual today.

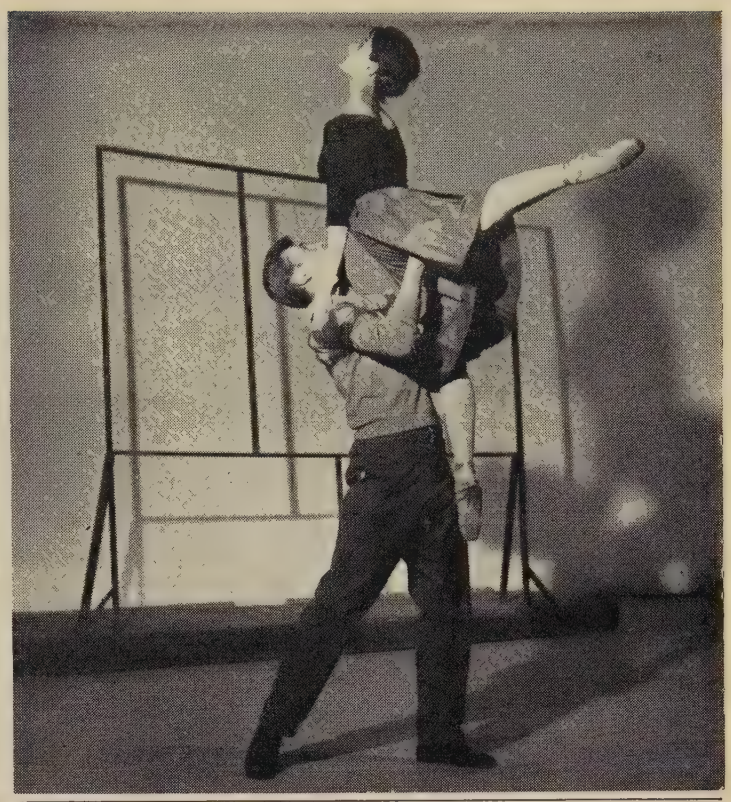
They are emotional by nature and find little difficulty in bringing this necessary quality to their stage performances. Add to this their natural vitality and musical attack and they often appear to be experienced artists when, of course, most of them are hardly more than children. They are often rough but rarely dull and this spontaneity, this eagerness, this "giving out" must be jealously preserved if the Turkish ballet is to attain the international reputation which it will, we hope, later deserve.

LA REVENANTE: *Two pictures of the same ballet with Canturk Sakarya, left, with Binay O-Kuren and, right, with Meric Sumen.* *Photo: Osman Darcan.*

The ability to execute technical feats is theirs naturally but owing to their lack of discipline and their lack of concentration they are unwilling to spend the necessary time in adding polish to these feats. The problem is to obtain this polish without destroying their lovely natural qualities many of which are so lamentably lacking in today's dancers.

They are not, at the moment, suited to the more rigid of the old classical ballets which can so easily bring out all their bad points and extinguish their good ones. It would seem that *Giselle* is the only one which would possibly give them a chance of showing their mettle. Let us hope that the very young Turkish ballet will gradually acquire a repertory suited to their own peculiar and very varied talents, that they will continue to develop along their particular and delightful lines and will not become a dim replica of the already established companies whose idiom is not their idiom.

DEVIL'S DICE: Another work created for the Ankara National Conservatoire with Evinc Gurkos and Feridun Llusoy. Photo: Osman Darcan.



NEXT MONTH

In the Christmas, December, number of Dance and Dancers, **look for ANTONIO on the front cover. Special features of this Christmas number will be DANCERS IN ART, a supplement compiled by MARIO AMAYA of famous artists' impressions of well-known dancers; the story of THE CAMARGO SOCIETY by JOHN PERCIVAL; a memory of the British designer, HUGH STEVENSON, by COLIN MACINNES; Ballet Perspectives — NIGHT SHADOW — by CLIVE BARNES; a study of ZIZI JEANMARIE by PETER WILLIAMS. All the usual and many new features. On sale by November 20**

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET
at the Royal Festival Hall
Eleventh Birthday

GALAS are like Christmas — they never quite live up to their promise. The eleventh Anniversary Gala, which London's Festival Ballet brewed up for September 8 at Festival Hall, looked pretty good on paper and although it was better than some of the concoctions that have been ladled out on to our eager platters over the past ten years it still needed that bit of extra flavouring to make it all that the menu said it would be. Four new creations the blurb told us, or was it five, and stretching generosity to its fullest, I frankly could find no more than one.

You see we were told that Vladimir Skouratoff would choreograph Poulenc's *Aubade* and not until we had sunk into our seats and opened the programme was it made clear that in fact it was "adapted" from Lifar's choreography. Now Lifar's choreography for this lovely concerto for piano and orchestra, first seen in London at the Cambridge Theatre in 1946, was never a patch on the glorious work created by Balanchine for Vera Nemchinova, beautifully designed by Cassandre, and which was seen at the old Alhambra Theatre when Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo was there before the war. The new "adaption" was not a patch on the Lifar original — so you can just imagine how it has all gone downhill. Skouratoff danced the Lifar work originally with Zizi Jeanmaire, before Petit's *Carmen* turned her into the international name she has now become, and he still manages to make something of the Acteon (called "Acheon" in the programme) rôle — something but not quite enough. It remained for Deirdre O'Conaire, possibly one of the most interesting revelations of the whole London season, to match up to the strength of the score. As Diana — the huntress who punishes a voyeur, peeping at her ablutions, by turning him into a stag whom she hunts to the kill — O'Conaire again showed us her beautiful Dubrovska-like line which even if it did not quite realise the cruelty of Diana nevertheless gave a feeling of classical legend. Her one fault at the moment is an inexpressive face. The orchestra succeeded in making a beef hash of Poulenc's elegant French cooking.

It could hardly be said that the *pas de deux* from the Asafieff/Vainonen *Flammes de Paris,* which ended the first part of the programme, constituted anything like a *première* — we have seen a lot of it over the past years. However, the version given by the two Hungarian stars from Budapest — Gabriella Lakatos and Ferenc Havas — did not bear a great similarity to the Bolshoi artists as regards to style. This is the sort of *pas de deux* almost in the Bournonville tradition that essentially needs a skirt; by wearing a short tutu, Lakatos threw the whole thing out of balance for a start. The sad thing about this Hungarian ballerina is that she has a great facility but everything she does lacks style to such a remarkable degree that her technique goes for nothing. She tends to bash at things and there is no light and shade in her work. Her partner, Havas, appeared to be less good than he was as Albrecht in *Giselle* a few nights previously. His technique seemed less assured and some of what he did was rough. Later this couple appeared in what the programme called a "Hungarian Gypsy" *pas de deux,* and we naturally imagined that as both are Hungarian it would be the sort of character number that such dancers usually do so well. Our hopes were dashed, however, because it turned out to be merely another *Flammes de Paris,* only this time in Hungarian gypsy costumes, or rather a very theatricalised version of this type of dress. It was spectacular in a music hall manner, and was obviously adored by the audience, who demanded an encore, but was very disappointing when you consider what could have been shown from a country with such rich sources of dance material.

But when it comes to vulgarity, I am afraid that the British contributions were very little better. Marilyn Burr bashed away relentlessly at the *Don Quixote pas de deux* with a moderate technique, little musicality and no sense of the style that should make this something more than just a display of music hall acrobatics. I do hope that the great promise that this dancer once showed is not going to become submerged in a welter of cheap applause-catching tricks. Admittedly she got little support, more literally than usual, from André Prokovsky, who gave a display of partnering such as I never hope to see again from a principal dancer — he neither looked nor acted as if he minded whether Burr fell on her nose or not, and at one moment she nearly did. He remains a dancer who should only be seen from the navel downwards, and it is sad that his years with Festival Ballet have not taught him to co-ordinate the upper part of his body. Admittedly, in his variation, his lower half managed to do some impressive things, but me, I like to see my dancers whole.

There was no question about seeing dancers whole in the *Giselle pas de deux* given by Belinda Wright and John Gilpin — you couldn't miss them in their candy pink costumes. Though both danced with the sort of elegance we expect from them, neither seemed quite at ease. In his two variations, Gilpin appeared to be missing out many steps that we are used to in other versions. However, compared to the rest it was all very cleanly given and restored a

VISITORS FROM HUNGARY: Gabriella Lakatos and Ferenc Havas, guests with Festival Ballet, in the Hungarian Gypsy Pas de Deux *which was one of the items they gave at the company's Anniversary Gala. Photo: Marion.*

sense of style to a programme which in this respect was starting to get out of hand.

The one real creation of which this birthday programme could boast was Jack Carter's *Grand Pas des Fiancées* which followed. It seems though that somebody has got a bit mixed up about the meaning of "fiancées". These six girls from *Swan Lake* Act 3 were prospective brides, none of them had reached the stage of being affianced to Prince Siegfried — for six girls to become engaged to one Prince causes talk, not to mention trouble.

Apart from this misleading title I am glad that somebody in this country has thought of using this beautiful music omitted from all British productions of *Swan Lake*. When writing about the Stuttgart production of *Swan Lake* a few months ago, which uses this music, I expressed surprise that in this country we did nothing about these, some of Tchaikovsky's loveliest passages. All honour then to Jack Carter for having made good this omission.

The music was used in the original Moscow production of *Swan Lake* as a grand *pas de six* for the girls who hoped to share Prince Siegfried's life and the Stanislavsky production makes use of the music in various ways, though not as it was originally intended — the Bolshoi, like us, omits it.

Carter saw it as a way of displaying Festival Ballet's principal female dancers, much as Ashton once did for the Royal Ballet's ballerinas in his *Birthday Offering* to Glazounov music — there any resemblance ends.

I think that one of the prime factors in display pieces of this kind, in which the main emphasis is on variations for specific dancers, is that it should show off those dancers' respective qualities and at any rate the variations should each have decided character. In *Birthday Offering*, Ashton cut his cloth according to the special requirements of each of his seven ballerinas. Petipa, in his variations for the seven fairies in the prologue of *The Sleeping Beauty* invests each with steps that bear out the name of each fairy in question. Jack Carter's fault is that, although he produces some nice *enchaînements* which have a wholesome regard for the music, not one of the solos has any definite character. This leads to monotony and causes the whole *divertissement* to lack excitement. Apart from Olga Ferri, who invested her solo with a mysterious and regal quality, and who thus scored one of the most genuine successes of the evening, it was impossible to differentiate between anything done by Belinda Wright, Marilyn Burr, Anita Landa, Jeannette Minty or Dianne Richards. A sameness spread over everything done by these five. Nor were matters helped much by the *ensembles* that linked these solos — they were asymmetrical in floor pattern where the music so obviously demands symmetry. It was Diaghilev who once told the young Markova that in the theatre everything must be simple. This is a truth that holds as good today as it did over thirty years ago, for, no matter how complex the basic structure, whether in a play or a ballet, to get across the footlights the complexity must be disguised by outward simplicity. Only years of experience can teach the eventual master how to whittle away all superfluous detail so that a work stands clean and untrammelled — Balanchine and Ashton have both learned this lesson and therein lies the secret of their greatness. Jack Carter has still to learn this, and that is the reason why his *Grand Pas des Fiancées* is in no way the South Bank's answer to the Royal Ballet's North Bank challenge. Although the work was well danced, occasionally very well danced, by all, it was only Ferri who brought any sense of star quality to the proceedings.

Norman McDowell designed some opulent and charming costumes — for some ballet, though hardly this one. Their glittering pagoda-like headdresses and the richness of colour and decoration in the dresses themselves suggested something far more mature and experienced than fiancées — really more a *Pas des Houris* than anything else. Yes, I know they were meant to be for a special occasion, and occasions of this kind need dressing-up to, but if there is still to be any sense in the word "fiancées" then the word should be underlined by the designing. It is still possible to bring a sense of occasion to costumes even if they are of the utmost simplicity and in more innocent colours. With immense pruning all round there is still the framework here for the kind of ballet which Festival can well do with.

The truth of what I mean by art concealing art and showing a simple and direct front was revealed by the evenings last work — Balanchine's *Bourrée Fantasque*. Though by no means a masterpiece it still shows the sure hand of a master and the company, treating it with great respect, give a splendid account of themselves. The only change of cast from the first performance, reviewed last month, was that Deirdre O'Conaire replaced Marilyn Burr in the first movement. Her dead-pan approach to the rôle brought her far nearer to the original creator, Tanaquil LeClercq, with the result that the humour became more pointed. She is a dancer who if she is carefully tended and developed should become a valuable asset to Festival Ballet. This season she has caused more talk and interest amongst the general public than any other dancer in the company.

P. W.

Mopping Up

ALTHOUGH in *Dance and Dancers* we give as much space as possible to reviews of performances, nearly always at the end of a long season we find we have missed things out, leaving us with a certain amount of mopping up to do in the way of performances not covered. So it is with the summer season of London's Festival Ballet, and before getting on to the last week of the season I should perhaps say something about a few earlier events previously missed.

As ever with Festival Ballet the season has seen a number of those exhibition *pas de deux*, which are sensibly used to fill out programmes. Olga Ferri has appeared in Gsovsky's *Grand Pas Classique*, but made nothing of a rôle that requires a dancer like Chauviré for distinction, or even bearability. André Prokovsky, at the performance I saw, was dancing at a low ebb in this, but he came into his own in the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux*. As I said last year (or was it the year before?) Prokovsky is splendid from the waist down, and deplorable from the waist up. To a great extent this remains true, but now needs the rider that technically his legs can sometimes perform prodigies of dancing. In this *pas de deux* the lower half of his performance was so uncompromisingly brilliant, that one could almost forgive — if not quite forget — the clumsiness of his arms and the awkward carriage of his head and shoulders. These, incidentally, are improving a little, and he has already become, on this night, a better performer than I ever expected. With really hard work, concentrating on his deficiencies rather than on his virtues, I think he might become numbered among the best virtuoso dancers in the West. But he still has a long way to go, and is even now uncommonly inconsistent.

On July 29 the company revived Oleg Briansky's ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*. First produced two years earlier for Nathalie Krassovska and Briansky himself, this capsule version of *Romeo and Juliet*, like those of Lifar and Skibine before it, is set to Tchaikovsky's Fantasy-Overture. The music allows little space for the dramatic narrative, and by cutting down Shakespeare's cast to what must surely be the bare Equity minimum of two, Briansky gives the dancers little more opportunity than that of expressing a few more or less appropriate emotions. The choreographic vocabulary he uses is unimaginative and sometimes insensitive, yet this I believe was a first ballet, so perhaps one should not be too hard on it. The best thing about the work, and presumably the main reason for its revival, are the *chic* costumes of André Levasseur.

This season the star-cross'd lovers were danced by Belinda Wright and a newcomer from Yugoslavia, Jelko Yuresha. Wright gave a touching performance as Juliet, although her performance needed more dramatic light and shade. Her dancing was good, with light feathery footwork. Yuresha is good-looking, and danced with vigour, but he needs to project a stronger personality and also to lose a certain stiffness in his actual dance technique.

At the same performance the company revived the *Esmerelda pas de deux*, that solitary reminder of Festival Ballet's full-length *Esmeralda* produced in 1954. Marilyn Burr, with her forceful and often impressive technique, ought to have made more out of the *pas de deux* than she did on this occasion. She was giving almost every step an over-emphasised flourish, and in general danced as if she were trying to sell something. She badly needs to relax, forget her audience and turn the heat off. She also needs to smile far more naturally, and to lose the tautness of her facial muscles and neck. Gilpin, who later improved throughout the season, at this performance was good without being at his best.

On August 11, Vladimir Skouratoff appeared for the first time in London in *Le Spectre de la Rose*. On the whole it was, not unexpectedly, less sure a performance than Gilpin's, yet it had its own qualities. Athletic and unaffected, Skouratoff showed a sensitive regard for Fokine's romanticism, even though the costume did not suit him. He still has the natural nobility of manner that has always secured him a welcome in England, although his dancing is now beginning to show the traces of his itinerant career.

During the last weeks of the season all the three performances I saw were tinged with a Tchekhovian feeling of departure. It had been known for some time, since the beginning of the season in fact, that these were likely to be John Gilpin's last appearances as a regular member of the company. Yet the very imminence of his departure brought home to me that here was the end of a chapter of ballet history.

Ever since 1950 Gilpin and Festival Ballet have almost been synonymous, and the parting of the ways — even if only temporary or spasmodic — could not but be a moment of significance. How often Gilpin will dance with the company in the future is still not known, but certainly it seems as if he will never again be the company's sheet-anchor. Even if, as some people think, his absence from Festival Ballet will have — initially at least — an adverse effect upon the company's fortunes, from his individual point of view can doubt that Gilpin is taking the wisest course open to him. It is a sobering thought that during the whole decade Gilpin has been identified with the company, he has been given remarkably few opportunities to attain his full stature as an artist. Of all the rôles he has danced with Festival Ballet only four are likely to be associated with his name: Jack Carter's *The Witch Boy*, Michael Charnley's *Symphony for Fun*, Harald Lander's *Etudes*, and, on a slightly different level, Anton Dolin's *Variations for Four*. It was appropriate, therefore, that at least the two latter ballets should have been included in the last week.

Considering what an exciting ballet *Etudes* is, it seems curious that Festival Ballet should give it so comparatively rarely in London. This summer season, for example, it only received four performances, of which I saw the last on September 11. The leading rôles were shared between Gilpin, Burr, Prokovsky and Michael Hogan. Gilpin, who was still suffering from a minor ankle injury that had led to him being replaced the night before by Ben Stevenson, nevertheless danced with superb style and finesse. There is a wonderful cut-and-thrust elegance about Gilpin in this, and his perfect placing and dynamic dancing has him flashing through the ballet like a winged Mercury. This is the kind of dancing that leaves behind it a strong memory of its actual physical shape. I find I can recall in minute detail the curve of his body as it cleaves its way through the air, the arch of his instep as he unwaveringly pivots his way through the *grand pirouettes*, even the forceful bravura of his *ports de bras*. I will remember too the feeling of athletic contest, of fine-drawn strength being pushed to the limit of its endurance, that I always associate with him in this ballet. Just beneath the effortlessness of it all, there lay that hint of strain that somehow added to the excitement. Thinking of this I shall remember the flick of sweat as he spun around, the occasional grimace of strain that lurked behind his smile; tell-tale signs of battle that gave Gilpin's dancing in *Etudes* a nobility and dignity it would never have attained had it come that bit easier. The company as a whole was dancing well in *Etudes* — a ballet that always calls out their best — but the other three soloists are a weakness in the cast. Burr and Prokovsky offer Gilpin none of the help, stimulus or competition that Toni Lander and Flemming Flindt used to provide.

Both performances on the final Saturday were in their differing ways enjoyable. The programme opened with the second act of *Swan Lake*, which I missed in the afternoon but saw Wright and Yuresha dance in the evening. Wright did not impress me, there was a finicky daintiness to her dancing and a general air of affectation that detracted cruelly from her performance. Yuresha partnered well but made only a negative figure of the Prince. In the afternoon the programme continued with Dolin's *The Pas de Quatre*, which was replaced in the evening by a special performance of Jack Carter's *Pas des Fiancées*. I have always felt that *The Pas de Quatre* requires the Markovas and Danilovas of this world to justify it, and certainly in years past Festival Ballet have put out on occasion a number of spectacular casts. At this matinée it was danced by Deirdre O'Conaire (Taglioni), Dianne Richards (Grisi), Gaye Fulton (Grahn) and Pamela Hart (Cerrito), a cast rather more homely than spectacular. However, it had its merits: O'Conaire showed a sweetly period style and under-played humour, Dianne Richards had her moments, and a promising newcomer, Gaye Fulton, showed considerable charm, a good classical line and general trimness. (Despite a slight stiffness, Fulton throughout the season looked like one of the two most interesting girls to join the company since O'Conaire.)

Carter's *Pas des Fiancées* is reviewed elsewhere by Peter Williams. Being out of town at the time of the Birthday Gala when it was first given, I was very glad to have this opportunity of catching up with it. The only cast change from its first performance was the replacement of Anita Landa by Jill Bathurst, who was surprisingly good, showing a little of the quality of the young Nerina. First called into the company a year or so ago to dance *fouettés* in *Graduation Ball*, this was her first real chance to show her mettle, and she took it with easy aplomb. With good elevation, apparently confident technique and a lively soubrette personality, she established herself as being, together with O'Conaire and Fulton, one of Festival Ballet's likely future hopes.

Dolin's *Variations for Four* is a most efficient display piece for male dancers. Its choreography is perhaps not particularly remarkable, yet it provides its dancers with fine opportunities to show their paces, and its weakest element is the Drigo-like music by Marguerite Keogh. The intention was to show a completely different cast afternoon and evening (a fine achievement for any company), but the absence of Max Natiez made this impossible. Consequently in the afternoon it was danced by Ben Stevenson, Louis Godfrey, Barry McGrath and Ivan Baptie, and in the evening by Gilpin, Godfrey, Prokovsky and Hogan.

I reviewed this second cast in May after seeing it at Golders Green, and I have little to add. This summer Stevenson had up to then a very slightly disappointing season in a wide variety of new rôles, including an uncertainly danced *Harlequinade pas de deux*. In *Variations* he seemed to come back into his own with a performance which, if not rivalling Gilpin's, was full of remarkable promise. McGrath also impressed again with his performance of Prokovsky's variation. Godfrey — who was on the sick-list for a large part of the season — proved as excellent as ever in his own rôle.

C. B.

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BALLET FILMS
at the National Film Theatre

I PASS the National Film Theatre most evenings and have grown used to the queues which form outside for any interesting event. I saw none of these during the four-week season (September 6 to October 27) of ballet films.

This was not, to my mind, a season at all. It was a collection of (mainly) bits and pieces — snippets of films, gobbets of dances — with one or two worthwhile pieces thrown in; all arranged not logically, to show styles of dancing or ballet-making or even film-making, but arbitrarily divided up to make programmes with catchy but not very relevant titles like "Ballet today and yesterday" (this was simply one old, one middle-aged and five recent films) or "Ballet from five countries".

This was not calculated to appeal to the general public, and scarcely to the *cinéaste,* but neither was it sufficiently specialised to make it irresistible to the balletomane.

Most of the best films shown were, of course, repeats: the Pavlova fragments, the Bolshoi *Giselle,* Martha Graham's *A Dancer's World,* Maurice Béjart's *Symphonie pour un homme seul.* The two main novelties both came in the first programme.

One of these, *Ballets: U.S.A.,* was an old-fashioned documentary with a silly commentary and some unnecessary pictures of theatres and townscapes, but it had the great merit of recording parts of *Faun* and *N.Y. Export.*

The other, *Le Spectre de la Danse,* starring Nina Vyroubova, set out to reveal the spirit of the dance by showing the ballerina and others at practice and at work.

Unrealistic, fragmentary, pretentious, with some capable but undistinguished choreography and a camera-hogging commentary by Serge Lifar, this film was strictly for enthusiasts only. It seemed at times to be directed so much *ad majoram gloriam Lifaris* that Vyroubova got lost in the background, but enough of her style and authority, elegance and complete absorption in her work came through to make the film a curiosity worth seeing.

Also new was *Capriccio '59,* a tricksy fantasy with the Hamburg Opera Ballet which I found completely pointless apart from a few seconds of a rather effective slow-motion *pas de deux.*

The biggest disappointment of the four weeks, apart from the apathetic dreariness of the programmes as a whole, was the omission from the Russian film of *Bayadère* of Chabukiani's solo. Who, I wonder, decided that audiences would not be interested in seeing probably the greatest male dancer of recent years?

What conclusions can be drawn from the season? First, that the Russians seem to have done more than anyone else to record their dancers in action ; and the utter drabness of the British films shown left us with no excuse for sneering at the occasional Hollywood-style excesses of the older Soviet films.

Secondly, that simplicity looks better than over-ingenuity when filming good dancing, and a couple of dancers in a studio make more effect than a large *corps de ballet* on a mammoth set.

Thirdly, in Martha Graham's words, that "dance is communication", and a dance film with nothing to communicate will look pretty dull, however cleverly it is directed.

Above all, that there is a lot of good dancing on record, although much of it was not shown during this season. I hope that one day we shall have the opportunity to see more of it, imaginatively presented, without the padding of earnest instructional films and second-rate entertainment films which made up far too much of these programmes.

John Percival.

Dance and Dancers . . . . . ABROAD

AMERICA

THE ROYAL DANISH BALLET

BEGINNING their tour of America in San Francisco on August 12, the Royal Danish Ballet have since been making a royal progress eastwards across the United States playing in almost every major city with the exception of New York, where no theatre of suitable size was available to accommodate the company and its repertoire. In consequence, following the departure on tour of Britain's Royal Ballet, a major portion of the New York dance world, the critical fraternity, dancers and balletomanes, entrained for Philadelphia and Washington D.C. to view this much-loved company. (A report on the Philadelphia and Washington performances will appear in our December issue.)

On October 13, in Washington D.C., King Frederick IX and Queen Ingrid of Denmark, together with President and Mrs. Eisenhower, were present at a Gala Performance that attracted an audience of diplomatic and society notables.

BALLET THEATRE IN RUSSIA

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE, which has been having an up-hill battle pulling itself up by its boot-straps, as it were, during its four-month tour of Europe, started its five-week tour of Russia in the Stanislavsky Theatre on September 13 (fortunately, this company did not invite invidious comparisons by appearing at the Bolshoi Theatre) and, according to first-hand reports, the Royal Danish Ballet's Erik Bruhn and New York City Center's until recently Prima Ballerina, Maria Tallchief, danced off with the honours of the evening in *The Black Swan Pas de Deux* in a programme that otherwise consisted of George Balanchine's *Theme and Variations,* Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* and David Lichine's *Graduation Ball.* A capacity audience, including Galina Ulanova and Mme Krushchev, gave the company what is termed "a warm reception".

Interestingly enough, Eugene Loring's by-now historic *Billy the Kid* and Agnes de Mille's *Fall River Legend* were dropped from the company's repertoire for the Russian tour at the suggestion of Soviet cultural attachés who felt that they were too "blood-thirsty" for local consumption.

Since her initial guest appearances with American Ballet Theatre earlier in the European tour, Maria Tallchief signed a contract for the company's engagements in Russia as well as for the American tour, which is slated to begin on January 15 and run through to March 25. After their return from Russia on October 24, the dancers were scheduled for a six-week lay-off before rehearsals in mid-December.

INDRANI : A picture of the famous Indian dancer who, with her group, makes a return visit to New York. The Anglo-Asian Music Circle bring her to London, to the St. Pancras Town Hall, in November.

BALLET OF TWO WORLDS DISBANDS

BALLET OF TWO WORLDS, the company recently formed by choreographer Herbert Ross and his wife, ballerina Nora Kaye, ran into considerable trouble in Berlin where Ross's three-act *Dybbuk* was presented. According to *Time* magazine's report, "most of the audience walked out before intermission, and the critics were savage" and "friction with their impresario, Belgium's Henriques Pimental, was about to cause the Ballet of Two Worlds to disband only four months after its founding."

BALLET RUSSE CANCELS TOUR

THE first nine weeks of Ballets Russe de Monte Carlo's autumn tour of America, scheduled to start October 24,

were cancelled due to a breakdown of negotiations between impresario Serge Denham and the American Guild of Musical Artists. In consequence, some 40 dancers and 30 technicians are out of work at the moment. Among the points being argued over between Denham and the dancers' union were their demand that publicity photography and fittings of costumes be counted and paid as rehearsal time and their request for 24 hours complete rest per week, with no travel, rehearsal, or performance during that period". According to a statement in *Variety*, the weekly theatrical trade-paper, Denham claimed that this demand would have added some $100,000 to the company's operating budget for the 1960-61 season. "Our economics are based upon incessant mobility," he explained. While a company's profits may well be based on "incessant mobility", a dancer's instrument, his body, isn't and does require some rest and relaxation, a fact Serge Denham doesn't seem to take into consideration.

N.Y. CITY BALLET'S SEASON

THE New York City Ballet opens its Autumn-Winter season at the New York City Center on November 8 and will continue through January 15. Although other choreographers will be represented during the season, George Balanchine will probably be busiest of all. Among other things, he plans a choreographic setting for Brahms' *Leibeslieder* waltzes as well as two ballets set to music of Italian composers planned in honour of the Centennial of Italy as a united country. One of these will be set to a Stravinsky scoring of a group of Italian madrigals by the late 16th-century composer, Don Carlo Gesualdo. The other will be set to music chosen from Donizetti's *Don Sebastian*. Later in the season, George Balanchine will also mount three new jazz ballets (his answer to Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.?) to "progressive" jazz scores by Milton Babbit, Gunther Schuller and a yet unnamed composer. In addition, he also plans to create a new work to a score by Charles Ives. Also slated to mount new works are Francisco Moncion, who will employ music by Francis Poulenc; Todd Bolender, who has chosen music by Darius Milhaud; and John Taras, who, like Balanchine, will work with a Stravinsky orchestration or score.

INDRANI

INDRANI and her *ensemble* of Indian dancers and musicians so captured New York dance audiences during mid-August that Theatre of the East, her sponsors, brought her and the company back to the Barbizon Plaza Theatre for a week's return engagement, starting October 11. This Madras-born dancer, the daughter of another well-loved dancer in America, Ragini Devi, is a pioneer in the revival of the ancient styles which were once danced by the temple nymphs in Orissa. As Indrani proved on both seeings, she is not only an impressive artist but she is also a striking performer and her excellent male dancers and accompanying musicians make for an extremely exciting theatrical evening.

BALLETS AFRICAINS

THE Ballets Africains of the Republic of Guinea, consisting of a virtually new company and repertoire, had a four-week engagement at the Alvin Theatre, under the auspices of Luben Vichey, before taking off on their second transcontinental tour. As previously, the big public-drawing card with this company is the fact that most of the girls wear nothing above the waist most of the time

RUTH ST. DENIS: One of the Marcus Blechman photographs of Ruth St. Denis which form part of a special exhibition — 'Ruth St. Denis — A Visual Biography" — at the Museum of the City of New York. She is here seen as the Blue Madonna.

and thus appeal chiefly to two kinds of audience: one, the kind that can't get to Las Vegas to see the French bare-breasted imports in the night clubs; two, those who claim to be seriously interested in "ethnic" dancing. Since neither is completely appeased by a theatricalised production of this sort, those of us who expect a more magnificent ritual of dance to come from Africa will probably have to be content to await the company that Pearl Primus is organising in Liberia.

MARCEL MARCEAU

MARCEL MARCEAU and his company of Mimes, who played a record-breaking three-week season at New York City Center during September, prior to their national tour, were an immense disappointment in Marceau's balletic impression of Gogol's *The Overcoat*, reminding many of us of a rather up-dated version of the Jooss Ballet as we saw it in the late 1930's. On the other hand, Marcel Marceau, as soloist in his creations of Bip, proved once more that he is a genius of mime in the tradition of Chaplin.

ASTAIRE TIME

FRED ASTAIRE'S third television programme, "Astaire Time", sponsored by the Chrysler Corporation, was produced by Fred Astaire with Hermes Pan as choreographer and associate producer. It featured Barrie Chase, Count Basie and his band, David Rose and his orchestra, and the Hermes Pan Dancers. Obviously, the sponsors spent a fortune on this one-hour programme and Fred Astaire, similarly, must have put in weeks of time, effort and rehearsal in producing it. Alas, however, it all added up to a complete zero as far as creativity or contemporary entertainment was concerned. Aside from over-using props and situations, practically every movement sequence and pattern was nothing more than a series of television dance clichés.

It is more than likely that the Fred Astaire that everybody wants to see today is a nostalgic figure. And this is exactly what he provided — a picture of a rather tired, weary, ageing juvenile. Instead, at 61, he might well have done the iconoclastic thing and provided us with a new image to fit our time. However, since he didn't, one can only hope that he won't continue to rest on past laurels but, rather, will harness his talent and energies to enchant a new generation.

NORMAN MORRICE TO AMERICA

NORMAN MORRICE, Ballet Rambert's young choreographer, whose *Two Brothers* made such a marked impact on American audiences in 1959, has been awarded a study fellowship in choreography in America during 1961. This "Young Artists' Project — 1960-61", which is administered by the Institute of International Education under a grant from the Ford Foundation, provides a programme of three to six months of travel, observation, study and consultation, beginning in the Spring of 1961.

Arthur Todd.

SPAIN

FESTIVAL IN SANTANDER

OVER the years the Santander Festival has built up an international reputation and during the weeks of August the Spanish people and many visitors are given the opportunity of seeing some of the most famous companies and dancers in the world. This year the main dance interest was in the Ballet Theatre of New York and the company of Antonio. The former company which recently re-formed in New York to considerable unfavourable criticism seems to have made a good recovery because what we saw was a group of dancers splendidly

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disciplined who have a fine musical sense and manage to give everything with youthful enthusiasm. Led by Maria Tallchief, Lupe Serrano, Erik Bruhn, Toni Lander, Scott Douglas and Royes Fernandez, the company also had Igor Youskevitch as guest artist.

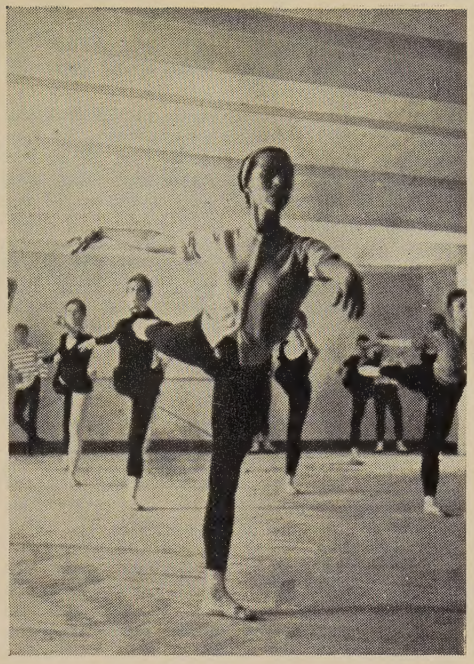
The first programme, August 10, opened with Birgit Cullberg's recent work *Lady of the Sea.* Maria Tallchief, in the rôle of the Lady, managed to bring a wonderful dramatic feeling to the part. While Royes Fernandez, as the Sailor whom she loves but leaves her only to return when she has married another, showed immaculate technique.

The whole ballet has been realised with an expressive sense of the poetic and plastic values of the story. What is more it is told with great clarity.

In contrast was Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* which followed, though it was no less enjoyable. It was lively and full of American touches of humour mixed with Romantic moments. It is the sort of work which only American companies can give with complete understanding. The programme finished with a rousing performance of Balanchine's *Theme and Variations,* which was mainly notable for the dancing of Lupe Serrano and Scott Douglas in the *pas de deux* and variations. But before this, Toni Lander and Erik Bruhn scored enormous success in the *pas de deux* from *The Nutcracker.*

The remainder of the programmes included: Fokine's *Les Sylphides,* Herbert Ross's *Caprichos,* Antony Tudor's *Jardin aux Lilas,* Eugene Loring's *Billy the Kid,* David Lichine's *Graduation Ball,* Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free* and the première of a work by William Dollar — *Chopin Concerto* (Chopin's 2nd Piano Concerto). This was danced by Maria Tallchief and Royes Fernandez and the *corps de ballet* and scored one of the greatest hits of the four-day season.

It was a wonderful four days and all the works were admired according to their different qualities.



BALLET THEATRE REHEARSE IN SANTANDER: Rehearsing for the annual Santander International Festival are, left, Maria Tallchief and, right, with Erik Bruhn in the Black Swan pas de deux. *Photo: Rico-Escobar.*

ON August 24, Antonio opened a four-day season. Today he enjoys a great reputation all over the world, and each year he aims, in his own performance and in his company, at greater perfection, and attempts new ideas, new values and new rhythms. This year he opened his first programme (August 24) with a recent work, *Variations on a Spanish Rhapsody,* to Albeniz' music arranged by Halffter. This *divertissement* fell into the following groups: (a) *Nocturne* for the *corps de ballet.* (b) *Petenera de Mariana* danced by Antonio. (c) *Jota* for Paco Ruiz, Graciella Vazquez and soloists. (d) *Malaguena de Chacon* by Rosita Segovia. (e) *Estudiantina, Jota Finale* for Antonio, Segovia and company.

The choreography was a little disappointing and though all the dancers gave the work with efficiency there was a lack of warmth in the interpretation which removed the grace and gaiety from Halffter's arrangement of the Albeniz music. The best items were Antonio's *Peternera* and Segovia's *Malaguena.*

This was followed by Antonio's version of Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat,* which London has already seen. Antonio and Rosita Segovia repeated their masterly performances of the Miller and his wife while Rodolfo Otero showed a fine sense of characterisation as the Corregidor without resorting to caricature.

The programme ended with *La Taberna del Toro* in which a typical tavern, where the gypsies dance flamenco, was reconstructed. Antonio was at his best in his *zapateado* and in a *Fandango de Huelva,* while his nephew, Paco Ruiz, danced a wonderful *Farruca.*

The second programme (August 25) brought another recent creation, *Suite*

ANTONIO IN SANTANDER: Left, on the steps of the Royal Palace of La Magdalena. Right, with Carmen Rojas in Serranos de Vejer *during the final number of a performance on the open-air stage. Photos: Rico-Escobar.*

Iberia, with each of the episodes a homage to certain parts of Spain — Malaga, Jerez, Rhonda, Seville and so on. The conception of *Corpus Christi in Seville* was unusual in that it was modern in idea, almost expressionistic. The entire company gave the piece as a whole with a sense of gaiety.

This was followed by the well-known *Fantasia Galaica* with its music and dances from Galicia; the programme ended with flamenco — *Serranos de Vejer.* The other two programmes repeated a few of the aforementioned numbers in addition to *Sonatina* (Halffter music); a *divertissement* which contained Albeniz' *Puerta de Tierra,* the Sarasate *Zapateado* for Antonio and Albeniz' *Sevilla* for Rosita Segovia; the Basque *Suite de Danzas Vascas*; Albeniz' *Asturias* and the classical *Pas de Quatre* in which the schools of a past century were charmingly shown. All four programmes were well presented and showed what a marvellous artist and choreographer Antonio is, and how he has passed on so much of his great art to the rest of his company.

José Gil.

MANZANARES TO MERSEYSIDE

Continued from page 20

lose little by being performed sitting down).

Another distinct feature of the *jondo* group is that the performer dances for herself — the audience does not exist — as though she were taking part in some secret ritual and re-living ancient sorrows. Quite different is that other type of flamenco, such as the *Caracoles* (which ended the programme) with its twisting and curling elegance. Though I can quite see that this curling originally gave the dance its title ("caracoles" means "snails") with regard to speed, it should really have been called "seals". *"How brilliant is the Calle de Alcala,"* sings the *cantaor.* Then he goes on to tell that *"they are plump and beautiful as young brides".* Pilar has most admirably arranged this for herself and for the girls in her company. Her own performance goads them all on and the spectators are left in no doubt as to the fact that really they are seeing something which is Spain and that here the different schools are being preserved as they should be. Others may stamp and scream and whip audiences up into a frenzy, but most of this merely hides a lack of basic knowledge and integrity.

Just how good an influence Pilar is shows up most graphically in the Antonio Gades of today. A few years ago this boy was shown to London during a season at the Princes Theatre — he was intriguing but decidedly raw material. Through the years he has improved all the time, the rough edges burnished off, until today he has become one of the finest male Spanish dancers that there are around.

In some ways he reminds me of Babilée, but for years now I have been worried because there was somebody else he looked like and I just couldn't think who. One day as I was walking up the staircase of the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, I happened to look up and there in a Delaroche picture of the young Napoleon was the answer. Standing in front of his horse surveying an Alpine pass was Gades taking a curtain call. There it all was; the sensitive face with its worried expression and the head held forward in a slightly hang-dog way.

Gades has a body that is slender, supple and well-tempered as a matador's sword. He also has a remarkable range, though in this particular programme we did not see him in any examples of the classical school of which he is a fine exponent. He gave, however, his *Danza del Chivato,* to music by Pittaluga from a *zarzuela* in which flamenco inspired steps are mixed with knee-slides and brilliant turns. Later he showed his prowess in a pure flamenco *Mirabras* (a half Moorish, half flamenco name). *"What does it matter that a king accuses me, if the people are great and approve me?"* goes the song.. What indeed if men dance like Gades does now In these numbers he burns his body up yet he still seems to have energy to give other dances with the company and to bring the correct regional atmosphere to a charming *Baile a lo bajo* from Castile and a spirited *jota,* with the arms correctly placed for once, from Aragon. In some numbers he partners Nana Lorca, another dancer who has progressed far, as she shows in her very stylish performance of Albeniz' *Asturias.* At one time she tended to spikiness, but now her movements are more rounded and there is a greater fluidity in her work.

The return of Alberto Lorca, a member of the company when Pilar first came to London after the war, was most welcome. There are few Spanish dancers with so good a classical technique, as he showed in his solo to yet more music from the ubiquitous *Luis Alonso* (these zarzuelas of Jimenez seem to have more popular tunes than those of Rodgers and Hammerstein). After an illness that has kept him out of the theatre as a performer for some years (in Madrid he teaches and arranges dances for the stage) it is not unnatural that he should lose a little of his original technique — very little, however — and the finesse is still all there, and he still presents a very handsome figure on the stage.

Another *Bolero Classico con Cachucha* was given by a newcomer — Salvador de Castro — who at the moment is promising and has great facility, being able to undertake almost anything, but as yet his classical work needs cleaning up. The finish of his *tours en l'air* were particularly untidy and, like so many Spanish dancers he lacks *plié.* However, in a *Zapateado* with Paco de Alba he came off well, as, in fact, did both boys. Years ago Pilar used to dance this double *zapateado* with Argentinita; later we saw Alberto Lorca and Alejandro Vega. With greater experience the two newcomers may be in the eminent line of their four distinguished predecessors. Another boy emerging from the background is Vicente Romero, who showed an impressive stage presence and a sense of using space in numbers from Valencia and Catalonia.

There is a member of the company, and one who has been with it for a very long time, but somehow she is seldom mentioned because she has few solo numbers. Dorita Ruiz has a very special place, as she is also unofficial ballet mistress. A great deal of the discipline in the company, and it shows through all their work, must be partly due to her. As it is, she has created a number of small rôles which will never be better done by anybody. She is wickedly funny in that great send-up of bogus Spanish dance — *L'Espagnolade* — and charming as the guitarist in *Caracoles.* It always amused me that some critics, when the former was first given in London, were shocked to think that artists should make fun of their art. In actual fact, *L'Espagnolade* is an exposé of those oh ! so many cabaret and student-display numbers which pour ridicule on Spanish dancing. It is the kind of thing that only experienced artists can get away with, and Dorita Ruiz and Antonio Gades have reached the stage of maturity and experience to be able to make such burlesque acceptable.

Even if, apart from performers, this programme showed nothing that was new, to faithful readers of *Dance and Dancers* at any rate, it renewed our faith in the basic truth about the Spanish dance. As long as Pilar is alive and as long as those she has influenced still dance, that truth will always be with us. Spanish dance needs such people as much as ballet needs a Rambert, a Royal Ballet, a Royal Danish Ballet or a Bolshoi, for they are all the foundations upon which others can base their more sensational efforts — possibly more exciting for the moment but of less lasting value in the end.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET
(Touring Company)

October
17 The Opera House, Manchester.
24 The Grand Theatre, Leeds.
31 The New Theatre, Oxford (2 weeks).
November
14 The Hippodrome, Bristol.
21 The Pavilion, Bournemouth.
28 The Hippodrome, Brighton.

at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden

December
14 *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Somes)
17 **(M)** *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle)
17 **(E)** *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Somes)
19 *Cinderella* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
21 *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle)
23 *Cinderella* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
27 **(M)** *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle)
28 *Coppélia* (Anderton, Britton)
30 *Solitaire, The Invitation* (London première), *Sweeney Todd*
31 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Wells, Doyle)
January
3 *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle)
4 *Cinderella* (Nerina, Ashbridge)
7 **(M)** *Cinderella* (Seymour, Doyle)
7 **(E)** *Cinderella* (Nerina, Ashbridge)
10 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Ashbridge)
12 *Solitaire, The Invitation, Sweeney Todd*
13 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Ashbridge)
14 **(M)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Seymour, Doyle)

BALLET RAMBERT

October
17 The Arts Theatre, Cambridge.
31 The Gaiety Theatre, Dublin.
November
7 The Opera House, Belfast.
14 The Theatre Royal, Nottingham.
21 The New Theatre, Hull.
28 The Theatre Royal, Huddersfield.

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

November
7 The Gaumont Theatre, Southampton.
17 The Odeon Theatre, Guildford.
21 The Gaumont Theatre, Ipswich.
28 The Globe Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees.
December
5 The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham.
26 The Royal Festival Hall, London (3 weeks).

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September
10 to November 4. Tour throughout Holland.
November
7-28 Tour of the West Country of England.

HARLEQUIN BALLET

October
27 The Society of Arts, Wednesbury.
November
30 The Esplanade Theatre, Bognor.
December
2 The Arts Association, Hartlepool.
Dec. to Feb. The Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham (Pantomime season).

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INDRANI
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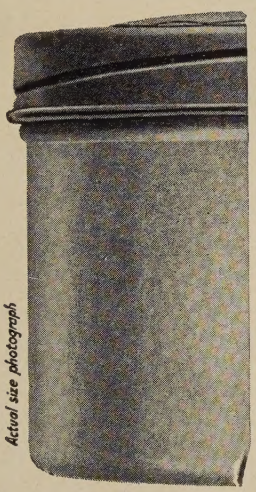

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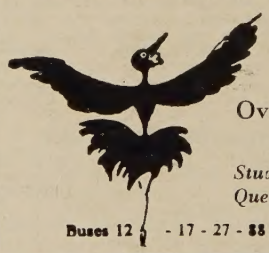

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